The WATCH TOWER and Herald of Christ's Presence

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VIEWS FROM THE WATCH TOWER

PULPIT HAS LOST POWER

The Rev. Lyman Abbott, of New York, spoke sadly of the decadence of the power of the pulpit, addressing 3,000 University of Wisconsin men and women at a convention at Madison, Wis. 'It is said the cloth has lost its power—it has,' said Dr. Abbott. 'It is said the pulpit has lost its power—it has. But a man, altruistic in the highest sense and spiritual, will never lose his power.'" . . . .—Press Report.

It was certainly appropriate that Dr. Abbott should make the above statement to college people. Admitting the facts, let us find also their cause. It is because of the inconsistency of its teaching that the pulpit has lost its power with the masses. The pulpit backs up and endorses the teachings of all the colleges of our day along the lines of Higher Criticism and Evolution. The people are coming to understand that this means that the pulpit is in antagonism to the Bible. If Evolution be true, man never fell and hence needed no Redeemer and no saving from a fallen state, but needed merely to be let alone in his evolutionary progress. According to Higher Criticism the Bible in general is unreliable. Moses never wrote the books accredited to him, and Isaiah, Jeremiah, Daniel and others never wrote the books accredited to them—never were inspired of God to write these books. And if this be true, then Jesus and the Apostles were deceived and could not have been inspired by God when they quoted from these sacred writings of the past and declared them to be the Word of God and vouched for their authorship.

NO WONDER CHURCH ATTENDANCE IS SLIM

On the other hand the public notice that the very ministers who thus preach Evolution, Higher Criticism, unbelief in the divine Revelation, keep right along preaching some of the absurdities which our forefathers claimed were in harmony with the Bible. Is it any wonder that the people are coming to see the inconsistency of such a position? How long might they expect to be blind to it? What must be the influence?

The result is that the masses have less and less confidence in the clergy. The people do not know what the clergy believe even when they hear them speak, for their address may be from the standpoint of the creeds or from the standpoint of Higher Criticism, according to their mood. The result of this uncertain sounding of the trumpet is that the masses are coming to the conclusion that the whole matter of religion is a big guess and that some of the guesses are influenced by temporal considerations. No wonder church attendance is slim! No wonder doubt and skepticism are prevalent. No wonder that faith in the Bible is undermined and religion made to look ridiculous and contradictory!

The unbelief of the people grows and threatens to become agnosticism, or worse, atheism! Those who have brought about this condition of things during the past thirty years are the college professors and the best educated pulpiteers of Christendom. And now they stand astonished at the results, which they should have foreseen. Verily they are fulfilling the divine prophecies of Isaiah, which, referring to our day, declare, "The wisdom of their wise men shall perish; the understanding of their prudent men shall not be manifest." (Isa. 29:14) No wonder the civilized world is in trepidation as it sees the onward march of Socialism! And however honest and well intentioned many Socialists may be, the results of their effort will spell anarchy and a time of trouble such as the world has never yet seen—a time of trouble, however, predicted by Daniel the prophet, whose prediction was endorsed by Jesus himself.—Dan. 12:1; Matt. 24:21.

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What is the remedy? No remedy can possibly reach the disease! The Bible rightly understood is the balm of Gilead which alone could have helped. But matters have gone so far that comparatively few have sufficient confidence in the Bible to be willing to make a re-examination of it in the light of the divine plan of the ages, which alone shows the harmony of the Word of God, from Genesis to Revelation.

But while we cannot hope to stem the tide of "higher critical," evolutionary infidelity—while we cannot hope to counteract the influences of more than half of Christendom and of three-fourths of all the pulpits of Christendom, we do hope, by the Lord's grace, to find some of the truth-hungry sheep and to assist them to an appreciation of the heavenly Father's message, given by Jesus, the apostles and prophets, but lost during the dark ages. We can help them to find the lost key of knowledge, whereby God's Word opens up, revealing to the eyes of faith and obedience a Creator infinite in wisdom, justice, love and power, a Savior and a great one, able to save to the uttermost all who come unto the Father through him, and a divine arrangement and plan consistent with the divine character. By these means the Lord's faithful ones will be sustained from falling in this evil day mentioned by the apostles and prophets. —Eph. 6:11-13; Psa. 91:7.

WE BELIEVE THE BIBLE

Those who oppose our teaching are given to misrepresenting it. They do not wish to speak untruthfully, but desire to hinder our work, which they fail to recognize as the Lord's work.

It is difficult to answer the arguments of our opponents in a few words, when they misunderstand our presentations of more than three thousand pages. If they cannot understand a detailed account, we have no hope of making a brief one satisfactory to them. However, we give here a synopsis:—

I. We affirm the humanity of Jesus and the deity of Christ.

II. We acknowledge that the personality of the holy Spirit is the Father and the Son; that the holy Spirit proceeds from both, and in turn from all who are begotten by it.

III. We affirm the resurrection of Christ—that he was put to death in the flesh, but quickened in the Spirit. We deny that he was raised in the flesh, and challenge any statement to that effect as being unscriptural.

IV. We affirm, with the Scripture, that God alone possessed immortality, "dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto." We affirm that this divine quality has already been granted to the Lord Jesus and is to be the portion of the elect bride, the "body of Christ." As for mankind, we affirm the divine provision for these and for angels to be everlasting life for the obedient. This, by many, is mistermed immortality. We follow the Scriptures strictly.

V. We hold that the entire race lost life with Father Adam, as a result of his failure in Eden; and that Christ died to secure a second chance for Adam and an individual chance for all of his race, who lost their first chance in Adam when he sinned. "As all in Adam die, even so all in Christ shall be made alive." (1 Cor. 15:21, 22) A few of us, comparatively, having eyes of faith and ears of understanding, have had this second chance in the present life. Adam and the great mass of his posterity

must get their second chance after being awakened from the tomb. But NOBODY IS TO GET A THIRD CHANCE!

VI. We believe that the soul was condemned to death. "The soul that sinneth it shall die." We believe that this death would have been eternal, everlasting destruction, had it not been for God's mercy in and through our Lord's redemptive work. By reason of his death our souls do not die in this full sense of the word, but are Scripturally said to "fall asleep," "asleep in Jesus." The awakening will be in the resurrection morning; and the interim will be a period of unconsciousness, beautifully symbolized by a restful sleep.

VII. We believe in the "hell" of the Bible, sheol. This, the only word used for hell for four thousand years, is translated more than one-half the time grave in our Common Version, and should always be thus translated. "Hades," in the New Testament, is its equivalent. "Gehenna fire," of the New Testament, is a symbolical picture declared to signify the second death.

VIII. We believe that God is able to destroy "both soul and body" in Gehenna—the second death. We consider it much more sane to believe thus, as it is more Scriptural, than to believe that in creating man God did a work which He could not undo; much more reasonable also than to believe He prefers to have the incorrigible suffer eternally, when their sufferings could do neither themselves nor others any good.

IX. We believe that, like the Father and the holy angels, our Lord is a spirit being. We are convinced that "flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God." We do not believe that our Lord has a flesh and blood body, a "little lower than the angels," and has thus been out of harmony with his heavenly environment for nearly two thousand years. We believe the Apostle's statement, "Now the Lord is that Spirit." This is the Jesus who will "so come, in like manner," quietly and unknown to the world, as he went away. We do not affirm, dogmatically, that he came in 1874, but we say that to us it is the evident teaching of the Scriptures. Our Lord warned us not to expect him in the flesh; that men might say "Lo, here" or "Lo, there." The harvest work in the universal church Nominal, the Laodicean period of the church, well corroborates our expectations of what his work will be, as outlined in his parables, etc.

THE TEST OF ENDURANCE

[This article was a reprint of that published in issue of June, 1894, which please see.]

"BORN KING OF THE JEWS"

MATTHEW 2:1-12.—FEBRUARY 4.

"Look unto me and be ye saved, all ye ends of the earth; for I am God and there is none else."—Isaiah 45:22.

Today's study relates to the wise men of the east and their seeing of a wonderful star which, as astrologers, they recognized to import a great event—the birth of a great King. At the time Palestine was a province of the Roman Empire, and its King, Herod, was not a Jew of the House of Jacob, but a representative of the house of Esau. Herod sought to perpetuate his dynasty, and hence the announcement of the shepherds that a great king of the Jews had just been born suggested the overthrow of the Herodian dynasty and the establishment on Israel's throne of a king in the line of David and Solomon.

Herod's disquietude is easily understood, but the fact that the people of Jerusalem in general should be disturbed by the annunciation of a king of their own awakens thought. Evidently they were in a very self-satisfied condition; under the Romans they were experiencing great prosperity. Herod, the Edomite, had built them a temple the grandeur of which outshone that of Solomon. The people were feeling so satisfied with their attainments that they had ceased to specially long for and pray for the coming of the Messiah, the long-promised king of the line of David. They were disturbed lest any change should be for the worse—lest it should mean internal strife as between Herod and another and lest it should mean strife with the Roman Empire, which at the time was treating the Jews quite generously.

A very similar condition of things may be expected in conjunction with the second advent of Christ. The powers that be today are styled Christ's kingdom, "Christendom," but they are really "kingdoms of this world." Any announcement today that Messiah's kingdom is nigh—that he will soon take unto himself his great power and reign (Rev. 11:17)—meets with resentment. If in surprise we ask why this indifference respecting the fulfilment of our prayer, "Thy kingdom come," the answer is, "Let well enough alone; do not agitate that subject; it may bring in strife and contention, because many are prospering so well under the reign of the 'Prince of this world' that they could not look upon a change as likely to bring any improvement in their condition—indeed some of them have reason to fear that Messiah's kingdom would seriously disturb their entrenched privileges and monopolistic control of the wonderful blessings of our day."

PRIESTLY INDIFFERENCE ON THE SUBJECT

Although King Herod called the priests and teachers of his day to inquire particularly respecting the prophecies of Messiah's birth, and although they answered him correctly, nevertheless, the records show no joy, no enthusiasm, on the part of the religious teachers in respect to the prophetic fulfilment which they had professed to trust in and to long for. They were indifferent; none of them followed to Bethlehem to find the new born king of the Jews. They had become higher critics and no longer believed the prophecies; they had less faith in them than had Herod.

And do we not find an antitype in this day? Are not the chief priests and religious leaders generally so out of harmony with the divine promises and so faithless as respects the glorious Messianic kingdom of which the Bible tells, that they are ashamed to identify themselves in any degree with those who seek the Lord and wait for his kingdom? Alas! even the Mohammedans and Brahmins of the East are waiting for Messiah and the Golden Age and disposed to seek the evidences—but amongst the most prominent ministers of "Christendom" there is apparent unbelief, Higher Criticism, Evolution and general opposition to Messiah and his kingdom. Let the civil government fight down if it chooses everything associated with the new dispensation. These are quite indifferent; they have plans and schemes of their own by which they are hoping to accomplish the work predicted for Messiah; they are anxious to raise money and to convert the world without disturbing the present order of things. Alas for them! how clearly they are mistaken! how terrible will be their disappointment when their cherished plans will all fail in a time of trouble which, while it will greatly disappoint them, will prove to be the forerunner of the reign of righteousness for the blessing of all the families of the earth—for the ushering in of "the times of restitution."

WAS THERE A MISTAKE?

Nearly nineteen centuries have passed since the events of this lesson. Israel, instead of being exalted as Messiah's kingdom, has been wrecked. Was it by mistake that Jesus was announced King of the Jews at his birth, or did God change his plan because the Jews refused Jesus and crucified him?

Neither suggestion is correct. Jesus is yet to be the King of the Jews and the King of the world. The "mystery" is cleared when we understand that there are two classes of Jews, two classes of Israelites—a heavenly and also an earthly class. Thus there are the two "seeds of Abraham," one of which is to be as the stars of heaven and the other as the sands of the seashore. The heavenly, the spiritual, must be developed first and be associated with Messiah in glory, honor and immortality, far above angels.

It has required all of this Gospel age for the selecting of this spiritual seed. With its completion a new age will be inaugurated. Then the earthly blessings promised will be fulfilled to the natural seed of Abraham. "They shall build houses and inhabit them; they shall plant vineyards and eat the fruit thereof"; "the knowledge of the glory of the Lord shall fill the whole earth"; to him "every knee will bow and every tongue confess," for all who refuse shall be destroyed in the second death. (Isa. 65:21; Hab. 2:14; Rom. 14:11) Messiah is already recognized as Lord by all Spiritual Israelites. During the next age he will be crowned Lord of all by natural Israel, and all other nationalities will enjoy the privilege of becoming proselyte children of Abraham in the flesh. Messiah will reign in his mediatorial kingdom for the very purpose of bringing these blessings to natural Israel and through her to all nations.

The relationship of Messiah to spiritual Israel, the elect church, is quite different from what it will be toward the world. He is our Lord and prospective Bridegroom; we are his betrothed and prospective bride, and joint-heirs of his glory, and are to be associated in his glorious Messianic work. "If ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise."—Gal. 3:29.

It will require the entire thousand years of the reign of

Christ and his bride to accomplish that promise—the blessing of all the families of the earth with full light and knowledge and opportunity for complete return to harmony with God and for the recovery of all that was lost in Adam and redeemed at Calvary. We by faith hail him as King, even before the establishment of his kingdom, and loyally and gladly submit ourselves to him, pledging our lives in the service of his cause of righteousness and truth. We, when praying, "Thy kingdom come," are expressing our sympathy with the righteousness which Messiah's kingdom shall establish and our faith in his promise that we shall sit with him in his throne. And when we pray that God's will shall be done on earth as in heaven we are expressing our confidence that the Messianic reign will be glorious and successful to the last degree—overthrowing all evil and adverse conditions and establishing righteousness amongst men on the same permanent foundation that prevails in heaven.

BROTHER RUSSELL'S LETTER FROM HONOLULU

TO THE "BETHEL" FAMILY:—

Beloved in the Lord: I drop this note at Honolulu, Hawaiian Islands. I wish you to know of my continued love for you all. We daily remember you and all the dear Israel of God at the Throne of Heavenly Grace, and feel sure you are remembering us. I will report the journey thus far.

We had a delightful day at Pittsburgh, Dec. 4th; about 40 children were consecrated, a church election was held and a discourse was delivered to about 350; the house overflowed.

At St. Louis, Dec. 5th, I had much pleasure in meeting the dear friends, and addressed them for about an hour.

Dallas, Tex., was our next stop—on Dec. 6th. We had quite a nice little convention. Nearly 30 children were consecrated.

San Antonio gave us a hearty greeting on the 7th. We had meetings all day. The interest and spirit were splendid. That class of Bible students seems to be growing steadily, both in numbers and in grace, yet not without trials.

Los Angeles, Cal., was reached in due time for Sunday services, Dec. 10th. A more hearty welcome could not be asked. "Love divine, all love excelling," seems to be the secret of this class's progress. About 400 were present in the forenoon, and about 2,100 at the afternoon meeting for the public.

Fresno, Cal., we reached for services on the 11th. About 60 of the friends from surrounding country attended during the day, and at the public meeting at night the attendance was about 500. Matters went exceedingly well, considering that there is no Class of I. B. S. A. there.

San Francisco, Cal., was reached on Dec. 12th (or rather Oakland). Good testimonies in the forenoon showed that the classes here are in splendid condition—apparently faithful and humble. The afternoon meeting was on consecration and the evening meeting on Baptism. At our request no advertising was done, so the attendance of about 300 must have been chiefly interested people. About 26 symbolized their consecration. The session closed with an enjoyable Love Feast. The next day nearly 100 bade us goodby and sang us away on our journey as the steamship Shinyo Maru left dock.

With much love to you—one and all—your brother and servant. C. T. RUSSELL.

"ABOUT MY FATHER'S BUSINESS"

LUKE 2:40-52.—FEBRUARY 11.

"How is it that ye sought me? Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?"—V. 49.

The Wonderful Babe of Bethlehem "grew and waxed strong, filled with wisdom, and the grace of God was upon him." The perfect child, the perfect boy, was of course far in advance of imperfect children. The schooling privileges of today were unknown. The education gleaned by the masses came to them chiefly through contact with their elders; history itself being handed down from generation to generation, except for the scholarly. Jewish boys, however, had an advantage over those of other nations because of the divine regulation of the temple services and the services in the synagogues every Sabbath day. Those services consisted particularly of readings from the law and the prophets by course. Thus all Jewish children had excellent facilities for hearing the Word of the Lord. "They have Moses and the prophets, let them hear them." Few had more opportunities than this—few were able to read; but Jesus was amongst those few—not because of schooling privileges in his youth, but because of his brilliant mind, which retained everything that came to it and to which, therefore, the Bible was continually an open book.

The surpassing abilities of Jesus are attested by the fact that when he entered the synagogue of his home city, Nazareth, his superiority as a reader and an exponent was so generally recognized that the service was usually turned over to him. (Luke 4:16) And yet the people marveled, saying, How comes it that Jesus is a man of letters, having never gone to school? And they all bore him witness and wondered at the grace of his speech. (Luke 4:22) The explanation of the matter is that Jesus was perfect while all about him were imperfect.

Our lesson relates particularly to an incident which occurred when Jesus was twelve years old. His "parents" were strict religionists and obeyed the Mosaic law by attending regularly the Feast of Passover at Jerusalem every year, and on this occasion Jesus was with them. The expression "parents" does not imply that Saint Luke supposed Joseph to be the father of Jesus any more than that Mary so considered the matter when (verse 48) she spoke of Joseph as being his "father." He was the foster father of Jesus—his foster parent, and Jesus was his foster child; the language is in exact harmony with what we would use under such circumstances today and is not a basis for any just criticism.

As might be surmised, the gathering of Jews from all parts of Palestine, yea, from the entire world, meant great crowds of people; on some occasions more than a million. Different families from different localities usually traveled together as one caravan. It was a Jewish custom that a Jewish boy should be considered **"a son of the law"** when he had attained his twelfth year. He then became responsible under the law and thenceforth was required to keep its festivals, etc.

JESUS A GREAT STUDENT

At the time in question Jesus had attained his twelfth birth day. He well knew of his peculiar birth and of the great prophecies which centered in him, related by Gabriel to his mother, and was on the alert to fulfil his mission—to do the will of the heavenly Father. He surmised that since at twelve years of age Jewish boys came under the requirements of the Law Covenant, this arrangement might possibly have been made as an indication of his proper course and duty—that that was the time at which he should begin his ministry.

Therefore he resolved to consult the very highest authorities respecting the teachings of the law upon this subject. From time to time he sought intercourse with the learned scribes and Pharisees and Doctors. He wished to make no mistake; he was therefore not satisfied with simply their opinion, but desired references to the law and to the prophets that he himself might judge and not rely too implicitly upon the conclusions of others. During a considerable part of the time of the Passover Feast the great men of his nation were engaged in public functions, and hence his best opportunity for conference with them was at the close of the feast, and then as he could gain their attention—coming time and again with new questions, with fresh inquiries about other types and symbols and their proper meaning.

When the time came for the return journey he had not finished his investigations of the Scripture teachings on this point. His parents, thinking that he was in the company with some of their relatives, went a day's journey homeward before they ascertained that he was not in the company. Then they returned, journeying another day, and the third day they found him in the temple with the learned men discussing the question which to him was the all-important one of the hour—the time at which public ministry might be begun, according to the law. Evidently he had just finished his quest and found as his satisfactory answer that, although a boy at twelve became amenable to the law, none could enter upon a teaching or preaching service until thirty years of age. This matter had evidently been settled just prior to the arrival of his parents.

Joseph, the foster father of Jesus, said nothing, allowing his wife, Mary, to chide Jesus with having been negligent of his duty toward them—causing them trouble, grief, annoyance by not coming promptly with them on the return journey. The words of Jesus may be paraphrased thus: Did you not know that I was twelve years of age; was it not your understanding that I had reached the time when I must become a son of the law? Did you not know that this might mean to me some great responsibility in connection with my service of the heavenly

Father? Did you not forewarn me that such responsibilities were to be looked for by myself and that I must be diligent to accomplish my mission? Why, then, may I ask, should you be surprised and disappointed in finding that I had tarried behind you? Did it not occur to you that as a son of the law I might have responsibilities at this time and that I must use every opportunity to be about my Father's business—to do whatever work I should find he has appointed for me? But now I will give you no further trouble. I have ascertained through study and conference with the doctors of the law that there is nothing that I can do as a minor in the way of beginning the Father's service. I am therefore ready to return with you to our home, and I assure you that I shall be as loyal and obedient to you as heretofore and that my apparent neglect of your wishes in the present instance was merely because I supposed that you knew that I would be looking out for my heavenly Father's business and my privilege in connection with it, and that you would therefore not be necessarily expecting me to return home at this time.

JESUS INCREASED IN WISDOM

In the last verse of our study we read: "Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men." It was not a boy who was to be the Redeemer, even as it was not a boy who had sinned. Jesus, therefore, to be a corresponding price for father Adam and the race which lost life in him, needed first to be developed into manhood.

The verse under consideration covers the period from his twelfth year to his thirtieth. For eighteen years he kept growing in wisdom and in grace of character. He did not grow in the Father's favor in the sense of becoming less sinful and more righteous, but in the sense of becoming more developed—reaching human perfection. Just so a piece of fruit in growing may be as perfect of its kind at the beginning as at the end, but it grows in size and in richness of flavor, and therefore in the appreciation of the owner.

So it was with Jesus. The perfect babe became the perfect boy; the perfect boy became the perfect youth; the perfect youth became the perfect man, and at thirty years of age was ripe and ready to be offered as an acceptable sacrifice of sweet savor to God, on behalf of mankind—"the Just for the unjust."

PREPARE YE FOR THE KINGDOM

LUKE 3:1-17.—FEBRUARY 18.

"Repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."—Matthew 3:2.

John the Baptist was the last of the prophets and Jesus declared that none of them was his superior—"There hath not arisen a greater Prophet than John the Baptist—and yet I say unto you that the least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he." (Matt. 11:11) Every member of the kingdom of heaven class must be higher than John because begotten of the holy Spirit. They are reckoned as members of the house of sons, while the prophets belong to the preceding house of servants: "Moses verily was faithful in all his house as a servant, but Christ as a Son over his own house, whose house are we."—Heb. 3:5, 6; John 1:13.

God proposed from before the foundation of the world that he would redeem man and that he would establish his kingdom for their restoration from sin and death conditions. The Redeemer of the world was to be the King by whose reign of a thousand years the work of Satan would be undone; the head of the serpent would be crushed and humanity would be uplifted out of sin and death and be brought back to the condition in which Adam was at first—"very good." The obedient would learn through experience a great lesson, valuable to all eternity; the wilful rejectors would be destroyed without hope or remedy. But previously, from amongst the redeemed would be selected a little company to be associated with the Redeemer in his great work. These would be called the kingdom—the kingdom class—the royal family—sons of God.

God promised Abraham, "the friend of God," that this great blessing would come to humanity through his posterity, and indeed all of the saved ones should be known as his posterity in that they would become proselyte members of Israel. Messiah was promised to be of Abraham's seed also, and it was to be through this Messiah that Abraham's natural posterity would be blessed, and would be made a channel of blessing to all nations. One thing not explained to Abraham was that Messiah would have a company of joint-heirs selected from amongst men and counted the "body of Christ," or "The bride, the Lamb's wife."

NECESSARILY TO THE JEW FIRST

Although God had not mentioned this elect class which he purposed should be members of the Messiah, or his bride, nevertheless God determined that the opportunity to become members of this elect, special class should first of all go to Abraham's natural seed. For the three and a half years of Jesus' ministry and for a further three and a half years after his death the privilege of becoming his bride and joint-heir was limited to Israel after the flesh.

Later it was sent on equal terms also to the Gentiles. Saint Paul tells us that it was necessary that the Gospel message should go first to the Jews because this was the divine arrangement. But he adds, "Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for [the best of God's gifts, the privilege of becoming members of the spiritual Israel], but the election hath obtained it and the rest were blinded." (Rom. 11:7) The blindness is not to be forever, but merely until the completion of the elect, spiritual class—then the blindness is to pass away and Israel is to be saved or recovered to the divine favor lost eighteen centuries ago. (See Romans 11:25-33.)

Meantime the dealing with natural Israel proceeded just as though Jesus in the flesh were about to take the throne; and just as though his disciples in the flesh were to be his bride; and just as though the Jewish nation would then be exalted and used as the divine channel; and just as though the promise would there have fulfilment: "In thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed."

"MY KINGDOM IS NOT OF THIS WORLD"

It was in harmony with this offer which God knew would not be accepted by a sufficient number that he sent John the Baptist to announce Jesus as though he would be a King of the Jews in the flesh and to announce his kingdom as though it would be immediately established. However, all along God knew and had provided for the crucifixion of his Son, and that merely a beginning would be then made in the selecting of the elect church, and that it would require more than eighteen centuries to complete it—and therefore require a tarrying of the kingdom for more than eighteen centuries, until the kingdom class should be ready in God's name and power to take the dominion of the earth——under the whole heavens.

And Jesus declared, "My kingdom is not of this world (age)," and as he did not establish his kingdom at his first advent, but merely began the work of calling the "elect," so the work of John the Baptist was merely to the Jew and proportionately only was he the antitype of Elijah. A larger antitype of Jesus, and of Elijah and John as forerunners, we may now see. Jesus in the flesh and all his faithful members in the flesh for eighteen centuries have constituted the antitype of John the Baptist. Their message all the way down these centuries has been to all who hear it, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." The antitype of the King whose kingdom they announce is composed of the glorified Jesus and his glorified bride, beyond the veil. These soon shall take the kingdom and reign gloriously as Abraham's seed for the blessing of all the families of the earth.

The church has cried in "the wilderness" in the sense that she has been alienated and separated from the world. She has called upon all who would hear to prepare for Messiah's kingdom. She has told more fully than did John the Baptist of the effect of Messiah's kingdom—the leveling up of the valleys (the lifting up of the poor), the straightening out of the crooked things and the smoothing of the rough things, that thus all flesh might see, appreciate, understand, experience the salvation of God. Both John and the church declare that this salvation is to be brought through Jesus and his glorified bride in kingdom power. The point we are making is that while John the Baptist was an antitype of Elijah, and was forerunner or herald of Jesus, so, only more particularly, the church in the flesh is a higher antitype of Elijah, and still more particularly a herald of the Messianic kingdom.

In John's day multitudes desired to be of the kingdom class, but while still holding on to their gross sins. And so it has been throughout this age. The only ones who can truly claim to belong to Abraham's spiritual seed are such as show their repentance from sin and their loyalty to God by a full consecration to oppose sin and to walk in the footsteps of the Master, even unto death—even an ignominious death, if need be.

John declared that the "ax" was about to be applied to that nation. Pruning would no longer do. Each individual must either bring forth good fruit or be cut down and be cast into the "fire"—the great time of trouble with which the age ended.

The people asked John what they should do following their repentance. His answer was that those who had a surplus of coats should be ready to give or lend to those who had none, and those who had a sufficiency of food should likewise give to the needy. Thus would they show their repentance from the selfishness and hard-heartedness which evidenced them as sinful —thus would they show a condition of heart necessary to an acceptance of Jesus.

"ART THOU THE MESSIAH?"

When the tax-gatherers came to John repenting they asked, "How shall we conduct our lives?" He answered, "Extort no more than that to which you are entitled by the law." Soldiers also repented and asked John respecting their course: "What shall we do?" He answered, "Do violence to no man; neither exact anything wrongfully; and be content with your wages"—thus will you show that you have repented and that you are seeking to do the divine will, for such a course will be very different from the one to which you have been accustomed. But notwithstanding John's preaching of contentment he was apprehended as a disturber of the peace and beheaded.

The spirit of expectation was in the air and some of the people, wondering at John's teaching, asked if he were the Messiah. He promptly replied, "No; my baptism is merely that of water." Messiah's baptism will be that of "the holy Spirit and of fire"; "his fan is in his hand and he will thoroughly purge his threshing floor; he will gather the wheat into his garner, and will burn up the chaff with fire unquenchable."—Matt. 3:11-12.

"WRATH IS COME UPON THIS PEOPLE"

These things which John prophesied of Jesus were partially fulfilled more than eighteen centuries ago, but in another sense they are yet to be fulfilled. They were fulfilled so far as the Jewish nation was concerned. Jesus did baptize some of them with the holy Spirit at Pentecost, and subsequently—all the faithful "Israelites indeed": and He did, later on, baptize the unfaithful with fire—a time of trouble. Writing of that trouble St. Paul says, "Wrath is come upon this people to the uttermost; that all things written in the law and in the prophets concerning them might be fulfilled." Jesus did a harvesting work there for the Jewish nation only. He gathered their wheat into the garner of the Gospel age by begetting them of the holy Spirit at Pentecost and onward, and "burned up" the nation in a time of trouble with which their age ended, in A. D. 70.

But now for the larger fulfilment—world-wide. In the end of this age all the "wheat" class are to be gathered into the heavenly garner by the change of the first resurrection, and in the time of trouble coming all others than the true church will be cut off from association with the church and from all opportunity of membership in it—as "tares" they will be burned—reduced to the level of the rest of humanity. But, thank God! at that time will begin the work of blessing the masses of mankind; all the families of the earth are to be blest by the glorious, Messianic kingdom!

TO MARRY OR NOT TO MARRY

We are asked to publish the below letter respecting marriage, in the hope that it may be helpful to some considering this subject:—

"DEAR SISTER:—As your conduct towards me is not as formerly, but you pass me and seem to intentionally avoid giving me recognition, it has made me think that perhaps you may have some unfriendly feeling towards me on account of the stand I have taken, or on account of something that I may have said. If I have done you any wrong I ask your forgiveness.

"I can sympathize with you, as I also have a fight with the fallen flesh, and I will tell you how I feel and look at the matter of matrimony at this late moment of the harvest time, and how, by the Lord's grace, I obtain strength.

"This matter should be viewed by us only from the standpoint of the new mind, and by thus doing I find it the greatest help to keep the flesh from dictating to me along fleshly lines.

"We should also constantly have the spiritual welfare of ourselves as well as of others uppermost in our mind; and I thus ask myself: How can I help a sister spiritually through the union of the flesh? How will it help the sister or myself in setting our affections on things above? Is it the sister's fellowship I desire? If so, can I not have that without marriage? If not always personally, can I not have it through the course of letter writing, and thus help and encourage the sister spiritually, and develop character thereby?

"We are to crucify the tendencies of the fallen flesh, which are selfish desires, and put the body under and not give in to it, for now we are walking in newness of life, and know the brethren, not after the flesh, but after the spirit—'Ye are neither male nor female, but all one in Christ Jesus.' Let our love be a pure, holy, brotherly love.

"The 'Vow' I find a great help, especially the portion which reads, 'Thy will be done in my mortal body.' What is the Lord's will? What was this sexual distinction given for? I find it was for the filling of the earth, to populate it, and that after that has been accomplished the sexual distinction will cease.

"Realizing that there is no distinction of sex among the angels and that such will also be the future condition of humanity, I ask myself, Should I, at this closing moment of our pilgrimage, yield, or will I be more pleasing to the Lord if I now develop character in myself in the direction of our future condition, not only by setting my affections on things above and developing the new mind, but also by putting the desires of my fleshly body under?

"Although these fleshly bodies are to serve us while yet on this side the veil, they should not be used to serve us in sin and fallen tendencies.

"The Apostle said that we commit no sin if we marry, but this also includes our duty to perform the Father's will and make proper use of our functions, or abstain, and this cannot be done on account of the fallen and degraded flesh, as testified by those who have gone through this experience.

"The best way is to ask for strength and grace, and to be faithful to the admonition given us by St. Paul, which is, 'Let every man abide in the calling wherein he was called'; and by so doing we certainly will receive a blessing, perhaps a greater blessing than we think; it may win for us the crown, and the ignoring of it may prevent us from obtaining it and thus we may become members of the great company.

"A single person, when consecrating, agrees to give up more time to the Lord than can a married one. Realizing this, would it be right for me to take back some of the time which I have given to the Lord and give it to some one else? Would I be pleasing to the Lord by so doing?

"Do I know of an instance where a brother or sister has profited spiritually by the union? Perhaps a few, but as St. Paul said, 'He that is unmarried careth for the things that belong to the Lord, how he may please the Lord, but he that is married careth for the things that are of the world, how he may please his wife.'

"The thought might suggest itself to me: Perhaps I might need just such experiences, just such troubles in the flesh to perfect me. To this I answer, If so, I will leave it in the hands of the Lord to give them to me, without trying to help him by giving myself persecutions, for he knows best what I need, but will strive to please him, remembering that 'Obedience is better than sacrifice.'

"We are told to make straight the path for our feet, and as the natural man can run better with the least burden, so also the spiritual man. Why should I cast extra stones and obstacles in my own way to hinder myself from running as I should?

"Viewing it from my personal standpoint, I ask myself, Would this union put two in the work? Or would it take out two, in the sense of preventing a sister or myself or both from entering now or in the future?

"Being tied down by obligations to those depending upon me, and not permitted to enter the colporteur work at present, I ask myself, Should I make my obligations heavier and also tie a sister down, preventing her from active service, now or in the future, and have her use her consecrated time in ministering to my fleshly body? 'Ye are bought with a price; be not ye the servants of men.'

"Should the Lord see fit to make me foot-loose, then, viewing it from that standpoint, I should have to ask myself, Have I enough working capital for two, or can I earn enough in the work without the sister's assistance, should she become unable to help support herself? Or, should I become disabled, would she still remain in the work? Can we together make both ends meet, or might it take both of us out of the work and make it necessary for me to labor at something else, as has been the experience of others, so that I would thus miss the blessings and privileges, not only myself, but also be responsible for the sister?

"How do I know that we both will stand in this last moment of testing? I know of only one instance, where error has overtaken one of those thus united, where the other remained faithful unto the Lord, while the life companion fell; I find that in all other instances, to my knowledge, they both fell. Consequently, I do not think it advisable to take chances and endanger my Christian welfare or that of a sister. If there is a

shadow of possibility that it might prevent me from making my 'calling and election sure,' I say to myself, through the grace and strength of the Lord, 'Don't do it.'

"We know that Satan is always ready to hand us plenty of excuses along these lines, and if we are looking for them he will be able to present one (even through a brother or sister) which we can accept.

"One brother expresses himself to the effect that we might seek advice upon certain matters and obtain the same from some who are not able to give advice to the little flock, as they may be or will be members of the great company.

"By scrutinizing every thought, and word, and action, I find that selfish thoughts should have no place in us, and if we do not give place to wrong thoughts they cannot result in wrong actions.

"The time is so short! It is not so much the years now, but we count the time by weeks and days; as was mentioned at the Mountain Lake Park Convention, it is only about one hundred and fifty weeks until the last member of the little flock shall have passed beyond the second veil, and some of this time has since passed.

"I pray the Lord to overrule these words, should they not be fully in accord with the new mind or his will.

"Pray for me, dear sister, that I may be a conqueror, yea, more than an overcomer.

"With much Christian love from your brother and fellow-runner in the narrow way, _____."

Notwithstanding the good arguments of this letter we are not to forget the other side of the question, which the Apostle sets forth. With each one rests the responsibility of his decision to marry or not to marry. To some the relationship must surely appear as above, but to others equally conscientious it may seem different. Let each one be fully persuaded in his own mind.

We certainly believe that those who cannot quite fully settle the matter and take a decided stand, determined not to marry, should very properly take the other decided stand and get married. Nothing is much more injurious to spirituality than indecision, wavering, lukewarmness. Do not trifle with your own earthly affections nor with the affections of others. Settle matters at once and firmly as you think would be most to the Lord's glory—most in harmony with the divine will. Act upon this decision and put far from you everything to the contrary, so that you can give the best that you have to the Lord. A decision, a positiveness, will help in the development of character. Trifling undermines true character.

THE PRAISE BELONGS TO HIM

I know if I am chosen to joint-heirship with my Lord,
To reign with him in glory, to receive that great reward;
If after all my weaknesses a crown for me he'll claim,
I know that choice will surely bring great glory to God's name.

If I had been more worthy, and my stumblings had been few,
When men gave God the glory, they'd have praised my virtue, too;
If I'd ne'er lost a battle, or had never missed the mark,
As they talked about his goodness, mine, also, they'd remark.

But my being so deficient, in thought and word and deed,
Means he'll get all the glory—he deserves it all, indeed.
When they see this weak mortal raised to such immortal heights,
What praise will rise to him who in such nothingness delights!

I know that when my Savior did return to heaven above,
And was crowned with wondrous glory, it did prove his Father's love;
But thinking of Christ's merit, and his sinless life of grace,
'Twas no wonder that Jehovah chose him for such a place.

With me it is so different; I have not one thing to plead,
That I should be more honored than another bruised reed;
And truly there's no reason to give me a mite of praise;
To him belongs all glory for the joys which crown my days.

If you knew all my failings, and my blemishes so vile,
And saw the loving patience my Father shows the while,
'Twould amaze you beyond measure to think he could or would
Make me an able servant who should do his people good.

But if to him such praise is due because of what I am—
Because of such a weakling he has made a stronger man,
Then what will be his glory when he's raised me higher still,
And crowned me with his choicest one the top of Zion's Hill?

That all these years of striving find me so imperfect still,
Does not speak much to my credit nor give a happy thrill;
Where I appear as worthy 'tis because his grace is there,
And in the praise and glory I deserve no part, no share.

I hate my faults and failings, and I fight them day by day,
But from self with all its weaknesses I cannot get away;
Despite this fact, he uses me—beyond is still more grace—
And hosts will tell his glory—his who found poor me a place.

BENJAMIN H. BARTON.

THE VOW BOOKMARK

We have prepared a very neat bookmark of thin white celluloid. On one side of it The Vow is printed in clear type in dark blue ink. On the other side is a picture of the white dove which hangs in the center of Brother Russell's study in Brooklyn. Under the picture is a beautiful poem entitled "The Bridegroom's Dove," which is a real inspiration to Christ-likeness. It was our intention to send one of these with each WATCH TOWER receipt, but we find that some were missed.

We now have reports from about ten thousand who have taken *The Vow*, and we would like each of these to have one of the bookmarks. Any such who have not received one will notify us and they will receive one by return mail.

THE NEWSPAPER SYNDICATE'S IDEA

For the benefit of our readers we remark that Brother Russell is very anxious to co-operate with the Newspaper Syndicate which handles his weekly sermons. While he retains fullest liberty in respect to the subject matter of his discourses, he yields other points considerably to the Syndicate's wishes. This will account for his greater care in his clothing, his more frequent use of cabs and parlor cars. The Syndicate insists that Brother Russell's personality has much to do in placing his sermons far and near. And Brother Russell is glad to yield to the Syndicate's business judgment, because he desires that his Gospel message shall be heard the world around.

PROLIFIC BEANS FOR SEED

Sister Smith, of Nebraska, recently discovered one stalk of beans which she declares yielded so prolifically that she calls it the Millennial Bean. She desires to get the beans into the hands of others, and at the same time to make a donation to our Tract Fund for the sending forth of free spiritual food to the hungry. Accordingly the beans have been sent to our office.

We believe the project quite a proper one, and if the beans be as prolific elsewhere as in Nebraska, we would be glad to purchase them at the rate of five beans for one dollar. (We have heard of seed wheat selling at one dollar per grain.)

However, in view of unfriendly criticism of enemies, we think it best not to sell these beans, but to give them free to our subscribers who have gardens, and who will request them —five beans each.

Sister Smith writes that they should be planted one bean to the hill, and the hills six feet apart. They should be planted in April. They keep bearing right along for weeks, and five should supply a small family. They will be ready to ship in February.

INTERESTING QUESTIONS

THE SEED AND THE COVENANTS

Question.—Kindly explain briefly the Apostle's meaning in Romans 7:7-25.

Answer.—The Apostle's thought is this: At the time of Abraham, God said: "Abraham, I intend to bless the world, and I will tell you about it in advance. Through your posterity I will do it, for I have found you faithful as a servant." St. Paul was one of those who was included in that promise. (See Heb. 7:9, 10) Abraham was not under the sentence of the law; but he had the promise that a blessing would come to him and to all others.

Several hundred years after this God entered into a special covenant with the nation of Israel. They bound themselves by the Law Covenant that they would do certain things; and God promised that the reward would be eternal life. But they could not fulfil the conditions, and consequently they came under the sentence of death. Therefore, they were worse off in that respect than if they had never come under the Law Covenant, for they had already received, prospectively, the forgiveness of sin; but now, being unable to keep the Law Covenant, they came again under condemnation to death.

The remainder of the world of mankind was condemned once. God had said that he would bless all those who kept the law; and the Jews had their opportunity but failed because of inherent weakness. So the law, St. Paul states, brought them death instead of blessing. How did this awaken in them what he says here? "I had not known sin but by the law." Suppose that before the law was given, a man did not know that it was wrong to steal or to kill. Not knowing it, and not having come under any law telling about it, he had not sinned against the law. But before that Law Covenant came, says the Apostle, not having the law specified to me, I was not under it. But now I know; and sin came upon me because I could not keep what I saw and what I had agreed to do.

Sin lives. What sin? Original sin, Adamic sin, which passed from Adam through heredity upon all his children. God said to Abraham, I intend to bless the families of the earth. I intend to remove the curse. Those who had failed to keep the law had come under the curse of the law as well as under Adam's curse, so that in addition to the curse which came upon all of Adam's children the Jew came under the curse of the law. That which the Jew thought to be unto life, he found to be unto death. The Law Covenant promised that if the Jew would do these things he would live. But he found that he could not do them, and the covenant brought condemnation and death upon him. The Apostle does not say that the Law Covenant was just and good, but that the law was good, the law was just—not the covenant. God's law is always the same, and always will be the same; but he will make a better covenant; for finding fault with the Law Covenant, He said, "I will make a new covenant." If God was not finding fault with the old covenant, why make a new one?—Heb. 8:8-13.

The unsatisfactory feature of the covenant was that it could not give life to Israel. God knew this beforehand, but they did not. God wished them to learn this great lesson that because of their own deficiency they needed the merit of the sacrifices of the Redeemer. The whole world must learn this lesson. Whoever will not learn it will not make progress; but God's promise is that in due time all the blind eyes shall be opened and all the deaf ears shall be unstopped, and that all shall understand clearly the conditions of God's arrangements and the provisions he has made.

IS THE NEW MIND THE NEW CREATURE?

Question.—Is it correct, in the strict sense, to speak or think of ourselves as new creatures while in the begotten condition? Or is it only when born from the dead that this condition is attained? In other words, Is the new mind the new creature?

Answer.—Yes; the new mind is the new creature. The Scriptural thought is that this new creature is now an embryo. This embryo is to develop more and more, and take on the character-likeness of the Lord Jesus. Then will come the birth of the new creature. The Lord uses the thought of begetting and birth as a picture. First, there is the begetting, and then the gradual development of the embryo; finally there comes the time for birth. But if anything checks the development of the embryo the birth will never take place; there will be a miscarriage.

So the new creature, begotten of the holy Spirit, is in an embryo condition, and must develop, or it will never be ready for the birth. The birth is the resurrection. As the Scriptures say, Jesus was the first-born from the dead and we are his brethren. He is the first born amongst these many brethren; and we also must be born from the dead to share his glory.

THE PROPHETS AND THE RESURRECTION

Question—Did David understand the doctrine of the resurrection?

Answer.—Even from what David has written in the Psalms we cannot really tell whether he clearly understood the doctrine of the resurrection; for the Scriptures inform us that David spoke and wrote very much by inspiration. The Apostle Peter tells that many of the prophets themselves did not know the import of the things they were saying; but that the Spirit of God moved them. God reserved much of the understanding for the church. So when the Prophet David makes certain allusions to the resurrection, we do not know whether he fully understood or not. We believe that all those in God's confidence knew that, though they were dying, yet the time would come when God would recover them from the grave. The resurrection hope was the hope of all the Jewish nation, not only in the days of Jesus, but prior to that time.

In the days of Jesus the orthodox Jews, the holiness people, or Pharisees, were firm believers in the Resurrection. The Sadducees were the higher critics and infidels of that time; for they did not believe in angels or spirits, or in the resurrection of the dead; but the Pharisees believed in both. On one occasion, particularly, when St. Paul was in great danger, he perceived that part of the audience were Pharisees and part Sadducees; and thinking he could get the good will of the one part, he cried out, "I believe in the resurrection. That is the reason I am on trial here." Immediately the Pharisees went to his side and said, "Yes, this man believes in the resurrection. We all do. It is you Sadducees who do not believe in the resurrection; and you are trying to injure us."—See Acts 23:6-9.

And so we feel sure that David believed in the resurrection. We are to remember, however, that while apparently he spoke of his own resurrection—"Thou wilt not leave my soul in sheol, nor suffer thine Holy One to see corruption"—St. Peter, speaking, we believe, under inspiration, said that David spoke these words not concerning himself, but being a prophet he spoke beforehand of Christ, that Christ's soul would not be left in sheol. (Acts 2:29-32) So the principal text in the Psalms that tells of David's faith in the resurrection, we are told, is applicable prophetically; but we think there is no question in the matter that David and all the prophets in the past knew that they were not getting their reward then, but must get it in the future.

St. Paul brings this fact to our attention in Hebrews 11:38-40. He had been telling about Abraham and his faith, and states that some of the prophets were stoned to death, sawn asunder, etc. Then he sums it all up, saying, "All these died in faith, without having received the promise." They knew they had not received eternal life or any of the things which God had promised, but they died in faith that they would get it in the resurrection; faith that God was able and willing to fulfil every promise he had made. So St. Peter gives us the assurance that they knew, though they did not understand all that they wrote themselves.—1 Pet. 1:10-12.

SOME INTERESTING LETTERS

IN DEFENSE OF THE TRUTH

To THE WATCH TOWER.

DEAR BRETHREN:—At a recent question meeting the following question was asked: "Should one who is in the truth bring an action in damages for defamation of character? Does not the Bible teach that we should endure persecution without resorting to the law?" On several other occasions questions of the same import have been asked. My reply thereto has been to this effect:—

Under ordinary circumstances the Christian should not sue for defamation of character. There are circumstances, however, under which it would not only be right to sue, but it would be a neglect of duty to fail to do so. The principle is illustrated in the suit recently filed by Brother Russell against the *Brooklyn Eagle*. Brother Russell occupies a position peculiarly different from any other person in the world. The Lord has permitted him to proclaim the Gospel through the public press, and today hundreds of newspapers are publishing each week his sermons. This is a talent possessed by Brother Russell which is not possessed by any other Christian, for the reason that no other Christian is doing the same work. In order to continue to use this talent it is necessary for him to maintain his good reputation. An attack upon his character by an influential paper would tend to destroy his reputation, and therefore to destroy his opportunity for service through the public press. Should he refuse to defend his character and let the assailants go unchallenged, he would permit this talent to be rendered useless. As the servant of the Lord he could not afford to do this, but must defend himself in whatever way is provided. Under the Constitution of the United States and the laws of New York,

the only means provided for defense against a libelous attack by a newspaper is by suit at law for damages; the purpose not being merely to get money, but by means of the courts to compel the wrongdoer to desist, and at the same time let the world know that the charges made are false. Under such circumstances there is no alternative to one who is consecrated to use every talent in the Lord's service.

The Apostle Paul occupied a peculiar position toward the church, being endowed by the Lord to do a certain work. He was arrested and brought into court for trial, and defended himself, taking advantage of legal technicalities. When he was taken before Felix for trial, Felix asked Paul if he would consent to go up to Jerusalem and there be tried. The Apostle could have well said, I am in the Lord's hands; I will not resist, therefore do with me as you see fit. Had he done so, he well knew that his life would be taken from him by the Jews and his opportunity to preach the Gospel would end, hence he declined to go up to Jerusalem, there to be tried, but appealed unto Caesar. It may be insisted that the Apostle here was merely defending his life and liberty, and did not himself prosecute a case in court. Such a position is untenable. He had said, "Neither count I my life dear unto me, so that I might finish my course with joy and the ministry which I have received to testify the Gospel," etc. (Acts 20:24) The Apostle's chief purpose was that he might fully use up his opportunities of service for the Lord. When, therefore, he appealed to Caesar, he put himself exactly in the position of one who institutes a suit in court, for the reason that the appellant on appeal becomes the plaintiff, or prosecutor of the case, whereas the appellee occupies the position of defendant.

When Brother Russell's character is attacked, he could say, I will not defend myself, but will permit the enemies to do unto me whatsoever they see fit since I am in the Lord's hands. Like the Apostle, his chief object is to finish his ministry of the Gospel. Personally, his reputation in the world is not dear unto him; not even his earthly life does he count dear, but these are necessary in order for him to finish his ministry. Therefore, it becomes his duty under a covenant of sacrifice with the Lord to maintain within legal bounds his good name and reputation, to the end that he might continue to preach the Gospel through the public press, and his failure or refusal to appeal to the courts for this protection would appear to be a clear neglect of duty. Keeping in mind always that his chief object is to further the best interests of the Gospel, then we can readily see that Brother Russell in every sense is fully justified in the position taken.

In the service of the truth, Yours faithfully,

J. F. RUTHERFORD.

EXPERIMENTAL EXTENSION WORK

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:—

I selected R—, 22 miles from here, as the scene of an experiment in the Extension Work. It is perhaps needless for me to tell you that I do not know anybody in R—. The morning came off rainy, but having decided to go anyway, I put on my raincoat and started. When I arrived at the station I found the train was an hour late, and then remembered that I had forgotten any pins with which to pin up my chart, that my voice was a bit husky and I had forgotten to bring any troches, and, incidentally, had also forgotten any breakfast with which to line up the inner man. This gave plenty of time to attend to these details.

Arrived at R— at 9 o'clock. The weather had turned colder, so that there was no danger of rain. Approached the first pleasant-looking man I met, told him I was a representative of the International Bible Students Association, was a traveling man in C— for a time, was greatly interested in Bible study, and had run out to R— to see if I could find a few Christians who might like to listen to a talk on methods of Bible study. Asked about auditoriums and he gave me the name of the man who owns the school, which is private. Went to see him and he turned me down cold; said it would be necessary for me to get some letters of commendation from local preachers who know something about my work; that there had been so many fakes come along that he never gave the use of the school building any more to people he did not know all about. Thought to myself he was wise, from his viewpoint, and if he really suspected what I represented he would be sure I was the worst fake of all.

Inquired about churches; found there were three, a Methodist, Baptist and Presbyterian. These three churches divide services between them, it being understood that on Methodist day all the churches have their own Sunday Schools at 10 o'clock, but at 11 o'clock all go to the Methodist church. Happened to be Methodist today, so I concluded to stay away from the Methodist church. Inquired names of trustees of Baptist church; was given two names, Brother M—, living some distance away on the mountain side, and Brother S—, living within a quarter mile.

Called on Brother S—; most hospitably received. Invited me to go to Sunday School with him; stated he would have Sunday School dismissed early, so I could have half an hour or so for a lecture. There were over thirty present, more than half of them adults. Was requested to lead in prayer, which I did; then the teacher of the adult Bible class told me he had broken his spectacles and asked me to lead the class, which I did. The subject of the study was the rebuilding of the Temple, which gave a splendid chance for bringing in some truths regarding the true temple. I then gave a chart talk on the three worlds, and was invited to return next Sunday and continue it (in the afternoon) when they have promised to have the whole town out to hear me. "This is the Lord's doing, and it is marvelous in our eyes." Before I left for R— I had told the Lord that if he desired me to go to R— and just sit down on the depot steps and read the Bible until my train came to carry me back to C— I would be just as glad to do that as anything else, but, of course, if he wanted me to go into this Extension Work I would be thankful for any evidences of his favor that he might be pleased to show me.

After the session (I spoke for about three-quarters of an hour, leaving plenty of time for the audience to get to the Methodist church at 11:20) Brother S— invited me to his home, where I spent a most enjoyable hour, listening to his questions, partially answering them, and asking him some to think about during the coming week. Then he invited me to dinner, and I went to my train, arriving home at 1:15, thankful of heart to the Lord for his gracious overruling of the whole affair. It is now 2 o'clock, the sun is shining brightly out doors and in my heart, and I am just going to the afternoon meeting. Maybe the Brethren won't be surprised when they see how easy it is for the Lord to start up this Extension Work! All he needs is a tiny, broken, earthen vessel, lying conveniently near his pathway.

Your brother and servant in the Lord,

C. J. WOODWORTH.—Tenn.

DEAREST BROTHER IN THE LORD:—

With great pleasure I remember the joyful days, when I had the opportunity to meet you in Scandinavia. I should be very glad to see you again.

We have here with the Lord's aid continued the harvest work and as a result I send herewith the new edition of "The Divine Plan of the Ages" (*Jumalallinen Aikakausien Suunnitelma*); the second volume of the "Studies of the Scriptures," "The Time Is at Hand" (*Aika on Lähestynyt*); "What Say the Scriptures about Hell?" (*Mitä Sanoo Raamattu Helvetistä?*); "Hymns of Morning" (*Aamulauluja*) and the tract PEOPLES PULPIT (*Puheita Kansalle*), of which we already have distributed about 125,000 copies. We have also translated TABERNACLE SHADOWS OF BETTER SACRIFICES, THE PAROUSIA OF OUR LORD, and also, from THE NEW CREATION, STUDY X, THE BAPTISM OF THE NEW CREATION. Vols. III and V are also preparing. In various places we have held about 100 lectures and meetings before great and interested crowds. The total number of people in attendance has been about 25,000.

We have heard that you will make a trip around the whole world and it would be a very great joy to us if you could visit our country.

I know you are very busy and I have given you only a little record of our efforts in Finland. We remember you, beloved brother, with thankfulness in our prayers.

Yours in the Blessed Hope, K. H.—Finland.

DEAR PASTOR:—

Loving greetings on your return home. It has not been my privilege to meet you in England this time, but I have followed you with loving interest and prayers day by day.

My object in writing at this time is to relate an incident to you which is interesting. Some months ago my eldest boy, who has always manifested an interest in the truth, reached the age of 15 years, when it was decided for him to leave school, but what we were to put him at was the question which perplexed us.

I suggested that he try the colporteur work. He protested that he was too young; but I told him of some as young as he who had succeeded in other places. He followed my advice, and from the first day had more success than I ever dreamed. What was my joy in getting home last time to find that in one day he had taken orders for twenty-four volumes!

Further than this, the effect seems manifest in a wave of enthusiasm over the friends, and several of the sisters are giving

some time with good effect. Even Sister Smith has been giving the work a trial with marked success. Such is the wonderful effect of zeal and shows how the Lord can use weak means to great ends.—1 Cor. 1:27, 28.

You can imagine the joy that this brings to our hearts. I know it will bring joy to yours also.

Yours in faith and love, R. G. SMITH.—England.

DEARLY BELOVED BROTHER AND PASTOR:—

Christian love and greetings! It has been the privilege of Sister Louise Jolly and myself to spend the past few days colporteuring some of the offices of Plainfield. The dear Lord strengthened us so wonderfully for this service and granted us such fine experiences that I felt constrained to write you.

Having naturally too much caution, I have very few times colporteured the business section of towns for fear of intruding. However, here few gave the excuse of being too busy, and when they did they invited us to call again. Those who purchased STUDIES thanked us many times for calling, as did also several who did not purchase. It is such a satisfaction to present the Message to those who are in the forefront of this great battle for existence and who seem to appreciate any literature treating the subject of present-day conditions.

A dear sister said to me at the Put-in-Bay Convention, "Don't neglect the business section of your towns. The Lord has some precious grains of wheat among the busy business men." She gave her experience as having been so timid that before she could undertake that branch of service, she would have to have special prayer of each member of the class in her behalf. "Now," she says, "I would not take anything for my experience in the business sections."

Again I desire to express my gratitude to the great Chief Shepherd, and incidentally to you, an appointed Pastor, for these soul-refreshing, life-giving waters of Truth, and His great condescension, in using to any extent an earthen vessel which seemed of no use at all. Pray for me, dear Brother, that I may continue to be "a broken and emptied vessel for the Master's use made meet," now and in the glorious future.

Yours in our glorious hope, M. M. SPRINGER.

CURE FOR APPENDICITIS

It is known that only about three out of every one hundred operated upon for appendicitis really have a diseased appendix needing removal. We give below a simple cure for appendicitis symptoms. The pain in the appendix region is caused by the biting of worms near the junction of the transverse colon with the small intestines, low down on the right side of the abdomen.

This remedy is recommended also for typhoid fever, which is also a worm disease. The medicine is Santonine: dose, 3 grains, an hour before breakfast; repeated for four mornings, or until all the symptoms disappear. Then one dose per month for three months to eradicate all germs.

This recipe is of incalculable value. Not only will it save the surgeon's and hospital fees of perhaps $200, but it saves weeks of ill health, inconvenience, convalescence and loss of salary.

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THE BABE OF BETHLEHEM

"For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, which is Christ, the Lord. And this shall be a sign unto you: Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes and lying in a manger."—Luke 2:11, 12.

WHY WAS THIS BABE EXPECTED?

Why were all men in expectation of him at the time of his birth? What was to be peculiar about him to lead Israel to expect his birth? The answer to this question is that God had made a certain promise centuries before and the promise had not been fulfilled. This promise contained the thought that a holy child would be born, and that in some way, not explained in the promise, this child would bring the blessing the world needed. Therefore every mother amongst the Israelites was very solicitous that she might be the mother of a son rather than a daughter, that perchance she might be the mother of this promised child. Thus the matter went on for years until, finally, the child was born.

The promise back of the expectation was that which God made to Abraham, saying, "In thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed." From that time forward Abraham began to look for the promised Seed—the promised child. He looked first of all to his own children, and was finally informed that it would not be one of his children direct, but that through their children, at some remote date, this child should be born—the Seed of Abraham. From that time onward, all the Israelites were waiting for the birth of the child that should bring the blessing.

But why was a Messiah necessary? Why wait at all for the birth of the child? The answer to this question is that sin had come into the world; that God had placed our first parents—holy, pure and free from sin—in the glorious conditions of the Garden of Eden with every favorable prospect and everlasting life at their command if they continued in harmony with God. But by reason of their disobedience they came under divine displeasure and sentence of death. This sentence of death has brought in its wake aches, pains, sorrows, tears, sighing, crying and death—all of these experiences as the result of sin.

Our heavenly Father said to our first parents—and this was the first intimation that he gave them of a deliverance—that "The seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head." The serpent in this expression means Satan—all the powers of evil, everything adverse to humanity, everything adverse to the blessings which God had given them, and which they had lost by disobedience. But the promise was vague and they understood little about the "seed of the woman" and "bruising the serpent's head." It merely meant in an allegorical way a great victory over sin and Satan, without explaining how it should come.

So mankind continued to die; they continued to have aches and pains and sorrows; they continued going down to the tomb. They realized that what they needed was some Savior to come and deliver them from the power of sin, to deliver them from the death penalty of sin—a Savior who would be, in other words, a Life-giver. They were dying and needed new life. This is the meaning of the word Savior in the language used by our Lord and the apostles. They were hoping and expecting that God would send a Life-giver.

It was on this account that they were so greatly concerned regarding the promise made to Abraham—"In thee and in thy Seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed"—they shall be granted a release from sin and death. In no other way could mankind be blessed. It would be impossible to bless mankind except by releasing them from sin and death. Hence, the Scriptures tell us of God's sympathy; that God looked down from his holy habitation, and beheld our sorrow, and heard, figuratively, "the groaning of the prisoners"—humanity—all groaning and travailing under this penalty of death—some with few aches and pains, and some with more aches and pains; some with few sorrows, and some with greater sorrows, but all groaning and travailing in pain.

But God's sympathy was manifested; and we read that, "He looked down and beheld that there was no eye to pity and no arm to save" and with "his own arm he brought salvation." This is what was promised to Abraham—that one should come from his posterity who would be the Savior of the world; and because this promise was made to Abraham and to his seed, they were marked out as separate from all other nations and peoples. To the Jewish nation alone belonged this great honor—that through them should come this salvation. Hence, from that time onward the Jews spoke of themselves as God's people, the people whom God had promised to bless, and through whom he would bring a blessing to all others. Therefore, all other people were called heathen (or nations, which the word means). Israel was thus separated because God's covenant was with them, and not with the others. But God's covenant with Israel was for the blessing of all the others: "In thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed." Now, we have the "why" of this wonderful babe's being born.

HOW WAS THIS BABE PECULIAR—HOLY, HARMLESS, UNDEFILED?

How could he be a Savior? In what way could he be different from any other babe? Why not use some other babe as the one through whom salvation should come? The answer of the Bible is that salvation could not come to mankind unless there should be a satisfaction of justice on account of original sin. That must be the first consideration. The

penalty, "Dying, thou shalt die," pronounced against the first man, must be met before the world could be blessed.

Why not let any man die? Because all were under the sentence of the original condemnation, and none could be a ransom-price or a substitute. Hence the necessity for a specially born babe, different from any other babe. In what way was this One differently born? The Bible explains to us very distinctly that he was not begotten of an earthly father. Although Joseph was espoused to Mary, yet this child was not the child of Joseph. The Bible explains that this child was specially begotten by divine power, in the mother, though she was still a "virgin" when she brought forth the child.

This is the Scriptural proposition; and while it may not seem clear to some, yet the Word of God standeth sure. If the Redeemer was not perfect then he could not be the Savior of the world. The promised redemption implied that Jesus would be perfect; it implied that he would be as the first man was before he sinned. "For since by man came death, by man shall come also the resurrection of the dead"; "As all in Adam die, even so shall all in Christ be made alive."

So this one must be, as the Apostle declares, "holy, harmless, undefiled and separate from sinners." (Heb. 7:26) He must be entirely distinct and separate from humanity so far as sinful features were concerned. If we had time it would be interesting to go into the scientific features—of how a perfect child could be born from an imperfect mother. If we can have a perfect life germ we can have a perfect child from an imperfect mother. If a breeder of stock wishes to raise the standard of his stock, he selects a fine bull, a male goat, or a male ram, and thus he improves the entire herd. And so, if we had perfect fathers, we would soon have a perfect race. But there is no father who can produce a perfect child. Hence it was necessary in this case (and the Scriptures declare it was accomplished) that God should beget this Son by power from on high. Therefore, that which was born of the "virgin" was separate and distinct from all humanity. His life came not from an earthly father, but from his Heavenly Father.

WHO WAS HE THUS BORN?

It is written that before he became flesh Jesus had an existence; as he declared, "Before Abraham was, I am." Again, in one of his prayers he said, "Father, glorify thou me with the glory that I had with thee before the world was." The Revelator tells us that "He was the beginning of the creation of God," and Paul says that "by him all things were made." And so our Lord Jesus was not only the beginning, but also the active agent of the Father in all the creative work in the angelic world and in the creation of humanity, and in all things that were created.

The whole matter is summed up by the Apostle John. We will give a more literal translation of "In the beginning was the Word." [This expression, Word, in the Greek is *Logos*. The thought behind the word *Logos* is that in olden times a king, instead of speaking his commands directly to his people, sat behind a lattice work, and his *Logos*, or messenger, or word, or representative, stood before the lattice work, and gave the message of the king to the people in a loud tone of voice. The king himself was not seen by the people—the *Logos* was the one seen. So this is the picture the Scriptures give us of how Jesus was the express representative of the Heavenly Father, the one through whom the Heavenly Father made himself known—the Word, or the *Logos*. So we read in the first chapter of John], "In the beginning was the *Logos*, and the *Logos* was with the God, and the *Logos* was a god. The same was in the beginning with the God. By him were all things made, and without him was not anything made."

In other words, Jesus was the direct creator of all things. He was the divine Power, Agent, Word, Messenger, the *Logos* of Jehovah. He did all the great work of creation; but he himself was the first of God's direct creation, the first-born of all creatures, that in all things he might have the preeminence—the first place.

When the time came that our Heavenly Father made known his great purpose that he would bless the world, he gave opportunity to this first-begotten one—this one begotten of the Father—to be the servant in this great work he intended to accomplish for mankind. Consequently, the Scriptures state that "for the joy set before him he endured the cross, despising the shame." And now he has sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high. He has this great reward because of his obedience even unto death, the death of the cross.

The Apostle speaks of him as having been rich, but for our sakes becoming poor, that through his poverty we might be made rich. He tells us how he left the glory which he had with the Father and humbled himself to the human nature. Why? Because, as already stated, it was necessary that some one should become man's Redeemer, an angel could not redeem man, neither could an animal redeem man. The divine law is "an eye for an eye; a tooth for a tooth; a man's life for a man's life." This was to teach us a great lesson: that perfect human life having been condemned to death, it would require a perfect human life to redeem it. It was therefore necessary that Jesus should become the "Man Christ Jesus," in order "that he, by the grace of God, might taste death for every man."

WHAT RESULTS HAVE FOLLOWED

The results that have followed have been that he himself proved his own faithfulness. "Being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross"—the most ignominious form of death. It pleased the Father thus to prove him, not only by death, but by the most ignominious form of death—dying as a culprit, being crucified between two thieves. What a terrible ignominy to die thus!

It would be ignominy enough for us in our imperfection, but for him, perfect, "holy, harmless, undefiled and separate from sinners," it must have been a cause for deep and poignant sorrow. Having completed the laying down of his life, at the end of the three and a half years, he cried, "It is finished!" What? Not his work, for much of that lay before him! He merely finished this part of the work, finished laying down his life a ransom-price.

What next? After his death came his resurrection; and we read that "God raised him from the dead on the third day." According to the Scriptures he was raised up from death a glorious being—"sown in corruption, raised in incorruption; sown in dishonor, raised in glory; sown in weakness, raised in power; sown a natural body, raised a spirit body"; "Wherefore God hath highly exalted him and given him a name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, those in heaven, and those on earth, and those under the earth; that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."—Phil. 2:10.

But we see not yet all knees bowed to him. Why not? The Scriptures tell us that before he begins his great work for the world of mankind, he first does a work for the elect, the church, those who desire to walk in his footsteps, to gather out of the world a bride, to be co-workers with him in all the great work of the Father. This is the only work yet in process of accomplishment, and this has been going on now for over eighteen centuries. We see how he gathered out the saintly ones from amongst the Jews, "Israelites, indeed, in whom there was no guile." Not finding enough to make the desired number, he proceeded to gather them from all nations, kindreds, tongues and peoples.

The Apostle tells us that when this bride class is united with him they shall be parts of the seed of Abraham; as we read, "And if ye be Christ's then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs of the promise." (Gal. 3:29) This statement relates to the promise made to Abraham, that through him and his Seed all the families of the earth shall be blessed. Thus we see the work that Christ is accomplishing now.

The invitation to become the bride of Christ is a very special invitation and those who would be his must walk in the "narrow way." If they will sit in his throne, they must suffer with him. If they suffer with him they shall also share his glory. So "the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that shall follow," were not only to be accomplished in our Lord Jesus, personally, but he was an example for all the church who are justified through faith in his blood. They have a share with him in his sufferings, and will share in his glory; they have also a share in the first resurrection; as the Revelator declares, "Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection, on such the second death hath no power; but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years."—Rev. 20:6.

Saint Paul says, "I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord," "that I might know him and the power of his resurrection" (the special resurrection) to the divine nature. How? By being made comfortable to his death; for, "If we suffer with him we shall also reign with him."

WHAT ABOUT THE FUTURE?

All the families of the earth are to be blessed, as originally promised in Eden: "The seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head." Also, as St. Paul states in the 16th chapter of Romans, "The very God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly." So, then, the next thing in order in the outworking of God's plan will be to bruise Satan and destroy sin.

When and how will this be done? Just as soon as this age shall end; because this age is merely for the development of the bride class; then will come the promised free grace to all the families of the earth. Messiah's kingdom shall come. He has promised that when he shall reign, all his faithful shall reign with him: "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I overcame and am set down with my Father in his throne." All the church will be associated with him in his great Messianic kingdom; and "he shall reign from sea to sea, and from the river to the ends of the earth"; and "Unto him every knee shall bow and every tongue confess, to the glory of God the Father"; "The knowledge of the glory of God shall fill the whole earth." The whole earth will become as the Garden of Eden. Paradise Lost will be Paradise Restored. The divine image lost in Adam will be restored to man. Human nature will be brought to perfection. But the glorious reward to the church will be the divine nature, to be like her Lord, to sit at His right hand, and to bless the world of mankind. Man will become not only perfect, having all that Adam had, but will have additional knowledge and character; and there is every evidence that this shall be an eternal blessing.

SHALL NONE BE LOST?

Yes, the Scriptures tell us that some will be lost, and that the loss they shall sustain will be loss of life, and therefore all the pleasures of life. "They shall be as though they had not been"; "They shall be destroyed from amongst the people." St. Peter says, "They shall be destroyed as brute beasts."—Acts 3:23; 2 Pet. 2:12.

When? When the eyes of their understanding shall have been opened to see the Lord and to understand his glorious character, and they shall have had opportunity to appreciate and enjoy his blessing. When such intentionally reject the grace of God, they shall die the second death, from which there is no resurrection, no hope of recovery. But, thank God, there shall be no knowledge of suffering for them; they shall be destroyed as brute beasts.

In proportion as we believe in this babe of Bethlehem shall we rejoice today. In proportion as we believe he was manifested on our behalf; in proportion as we believe he died for our sins; in proportion as we recognize him as the glorified Savior; in proportion as we have surrendered our hearts to him and seek to do the things well pleasing to him shall we have the peace of God.

Our hope on behalf of mankind in general is that in God's due time his blessing shall reach all—not the same as that for the church, but as St. Peter tells us in Acts 3:19-21, "Times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord, and he shall send Jesus Christ, who before was preached unto you, whom the heavens must retain until the times of restitution of all things spoken by the mouth of all the holy prophets."

THE BODY OF CHRIST

Question.—Is the "body" mentioned in Hebrews 10:5 and Hebrews 7:27 the same?

Answer.—The body which God prepared for sacrifice may properly be viewed from two standpoints: First, the Father prepared the body of Jesus, in that he was born holy, harmless, undefiled and separate from sinners, and of the human family through his mother. This is the foundation of the whole matter. But the Apostle Peter and also the Apostle Paul inform us that God foreknew the church, "the body of Christ," and, therefore, foreknew the sufferings of the body as well as the sufferings of the Head—foreknew our share in the sufferings and also in his glory.

In speaking therefore of the body which God prepared we should properly enough think how the Father prepared a body for Jesus which was actually, physically perfect and corresponding to the body of Adam, who was afterward condemned, and also prepared the way by which the "body of Christ" should be justified from the sinfulness of the flesh, that thus he might offer not only himself, the Head, but also "the church, his body," a "living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God."

TYPICAL AND ANTITYPICAL ATONEMENT DAY SACRIFICES FOR SIN CONTRASTED

In Hebrews 10:10 the Apostle is contrasting the atonement day sacrifice of the typical high priest with the antitypical atonement day sacrifice of the antitypical High Priest Jesus. The typical high priest needed once every year, repeatedly (not daily), to offer up sacrifices. The first part of the sacrifice was for his own sin, and the second part of the sacrifice was for the sins of the people. The first part was the bullock, and the second part the offering of the goat. These two offerings constituted the one sacrifice for sin on the day of atonement. And so, in the antitype, the offering of our Lord Jesus, when he offered up himself, was for "himself," that is, for his body, those who are to be his church, the household of faith. And then, a further part of his sacrifice has been the offering up of these members of his body, in harmony with their wills and in harmony with the divine provision.

Thus the antitypical atonement day sacrifices for sin have been in progress for eighteen hundred years. The special merit of the sacrifice was that which our Lord himself offered, through which our offerings are made acceptable. It is one sacrifice in the sense that it is all one body of one Priest that is offered, for the Apostle said, "We are partakers of the sufferings of the Anointed," and, "if we suffer with him we shall reign with him"; "if one member suffer all members suffer."

ALL OFFERING MUST BE DONE BY THE PRIEST

In Hebrews 7:27 the Apostle said, "This he did once when he offered up himself." The question arises, To whom does this refer? Does it mean Jesus, and the members of his body offering up himself? We answer, No. The members of the body do not offer up themselves; they present themselves; but the offering, so far as God is concerned, must be done by the Priest, Jesus, the "High Priest of our profession." The Apostle says that this he did once, and we answer, Here the thought is one fulfilment of the one type. In the type there were two sacrifices offered, and it is here called his sacrifice.

Our Lord offered up himself at Jordan, and he offered up all the members of his body, the church, at Pentecost. The offering of himself personally at Jordan was accepted of the Father, and the remainder of Christ's sacrifice was merely the fulfilling of the terms of the sacrifice. So the presentation of the church before the Father was accomplished at Pentecost, though it has required the entire Gospel age to complete the sacrifice.

This, too, was shown in the atonement day type: The high priest, after offering up the bullock, took the blood into the Holy and later into the Most Holy and sprinkled it on behalf of himself and his household—the members of his body and the household of faith—the under-priests and the Levites.

Next the high priest came to the door of the Tabernacle and slew the goat, representing the acceptance of justified believers as his body and their consecration to death. In the type this did not represent the second coming of Christ, but merely his manifestation in connection with the sacrifice of the body, which is the church. In the antitype our Lord as the High Priest manifested His power in the church at Pentecost by sending the holy Spirit upon them and thus giving the intimation that their sacrifice was made and acceptable in the Father's sight. All of the church who have since come in were counted in there—just as in our Lord's prayer he said, "Neither pray I for these alone, but for those also who shall believe on me through their word." Similarly the acceptance of the church at Pentecost as joint-sacrificers, as part of Christ's sacrifice, has continued ever since and we are members of his body, each in his turn being sacrificed until the entire sacrifice of the great high Priest once for all shall have been accomplished, and that accomplishment, we believe, is near.

The expression, "If one member of the body of Christ suffer, all the members suffer with it" (1 Cor. 12:26), does not, of course, signify that the dead members of the church would suffer with the living members, nor that those not yet begotten of the Spirit would suffer with the Apostles, nor that members in different parts of the world would suffer with the other members of whom they were ignorant. It merely means that there is such a sympathy and union and fellowship in the body of Christ that each is intimately and deeply interested in each other member, so that the interests of one are the interests of all. As, for instance, where there are two or three of the Lord's people in fellowship, as a little ecclesia or class, they are, in this sense of the word, a body of Christ and are interested in each other, and suffer with each other in the tribulations, persecutions and difficulties of life. And, in a larger sense of the word, any of the members of the body of Christ, in any part of the world, learning of the sufferings of other members of the body would correspondingly feel an interest, a sympathy and fellowship in their sufferings, or in their joys.

NOT A PART OF THE RANSOM

In the statement, "A body hast thou prepared me," we must be careful not to read in what is not stated. It is not stated, "A body hast thou prepared me as a ransom-price,"

but, "A body hast thou prepared me". (Heb. 2:9) The suffering of death on the part of our Lord Jesus constituted the ransom-price for the sins of the whole world. But the body, which is the church, the Father prepares through justification for association with Jesus in the "suffering of death," but this does not constitute the church partakers in the ransom-price. Only one ransom-price was necessary, and that was one perfect man's death, and that had already been arranged for before the church was invited to become joint-sufferers and joint-heirs with the Redeemer as his members.

The word "sacrifice" seems to be confusing to some. We are exhorted to present our bodies living sacrifices, but our presentation of our bodies to the Lord should not be confounded with the Lord's presentation of us. Going back to the type we find that two goats were presented to the Lord at the door of the Tabernacle. They were presented to be sacrificed, and so, when speaking of them, one might properly say, Those are the sacrificial goats; and whoever presented the goats might in one sense of the word be said to be the sacrificer.

But the word sacrifice, when used in the sense of devotion, or setting apart for sacrifice, should not be confounded with the sacrificing work by the high priest. The goats were not sacrificed merely because they were presented or devoted. God dealt not with the people, but with the priest, and only when the priest had slain the animal was it sacrificed, from the divine standpoint. Then, and only then, was it really acceptable to God as a sacrifice.

Applying this, then, we may desire to come to God and learn that now is the acceptable day, now is the time when the body of Christ may be devoted, or presented to the Lord. But something more is necessary than our presentation, and that further thing is the work which is accomplished for us by the High Priest, Jesus; namely, his acceptance, or his endorsement of our consecration, and the presentation of our offering as a part of his sacrifice. When the High Priest presents us with his merit imputed, then, and not until then, does our offer become a "sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God."

"SOME BETTER THING"—"OUR HEAVENLY CALLING"

Like many of our Christian friends, for a long time we did not understand how to "rightly divide the Word of Truth." (2 Tim. 2:15) We did not comprehend that God's plan provides, first, a heavenly salvation for the church, and then an earthly salvation for mankind in general. The study of the Bible along dispensational lines clears away all of our difficulties. It shows us that the promise that the redeemed "shall sit every man under his own vine and fig tree," and "long enjoy the work of his hands" (Mic. 4:4; Isa. 65:22), is God's provision for Israel restored to divine favor, and for all the families of the earth, but not for the church. Of the true church, the bride of Christ, it is declared that her members shall, in the resurrection, be like unto the angels—heavenly or spirit beings.

St. Paul distinctly says of these, "Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God." (1 Cor. 15:50) Jesus tells these that he has gone to prepare them a place in the Father's house on high. (John 14:2, 3) But the place for man, the earth, already provided from the foundation of the world (Matt. 25:34), is a very different one from ours, of which we read, "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him."—1 Cor. 2:9; Isa. 64:4.

THE CALL TO THE SPIRIT NATURE

Now we understand why it is that from Genesis to Malachi there is not one suggestion of a heavenly or spiritual hope for any natural man. Every promise is earthly. In Abraham's case, for instance, we read, "The Lord said unto Abram, Lift up now thine eyes, and look from the place where thou art northward, and southward, and eastward, and westward, for all this land which thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed forever. And I will make thy seed as the dust of the earth, so that if a man can number the dust of the earth, then shall thy seed also be numbered. Arise, walk through the land in the length of it and in the breadth of it; for I will give it unto thee."—Gen. 13:14-17.

St. Paul refers to this difference between the hopes of the spirit-begotten church, founded at Pentecost, and those of all others. Pointing to the faithful of the past, he declares that although they had God's testimony to their faithfulness, nevertheless, they "received not the promise, God having provided some better thing for us, that they, without us, should not be made perfect."—Heb. 11:38-40.

As soon as we get our "better thing," our higher reward of "glory, honor, and immortality," in joint-heirship with our Lord as figuratively his bride—then the worthy ones of ancient times will get their reward of resurrection to human perfection. Under Messiah's kingdom, those perfect men will be "princes in all the earth." (Psa. 45:16) Then from the spiritual to the perfected earthly ones the blessings and instruction will descend for the poor, ignorant, selfish and superstitious world to help them, to uplift the obedient to the perfections illustrated in the perfected worthies.

We have heard of the Sunday School teacher who told her class about heaven, about its pianos, harps, organs, horses and carriages, fruits and flowers, etc. We see that she was merely thinking of the blessings God has provided for the faithful and obedient of the world—"in due time." She had no conception of the "heaven of heavens" promised to the faithful followers of Jesus in the "narrow way." The Great Teacher explains that it is impossible to describe heaven with its beauties and charms. He said to Nicodemus, "If I have told you of earthly things, and ye believe not, how shall ye believe if I tell you of heavenly things?"—John 3:12.

In line with this, the Bible makes no attempt to describe heaven itself, nor its inhabitants. We are merely told that "God is a Spirit," "dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto, whom no man hath seen, nor can see"—personally. (John 4:24; 1 Tim. 6:16) Men must discern God in his works—the noblest of which is the perfect men—made in his moral likeness, on the earthly plane, "a little lower than the angels" on the spirit plane. The most that his Word declares of our heavenly inheritance is that "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him."—1 Cor. 2:9.

But while refusing to inform us of the heavenly condition, God gives us a soul-satisfying portion. Through the Apostle he declares (1 John 3:2), "It doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that when he [the glorified Jesus] shall appear [at his second advent, in power and great glory] we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is." Others, not thus changed from human to spirit nature by the first resurrection power, will not "see him as he is," but only as he shall be revealed in his providences and judgments, which every eye shall recognize.

How satisfactory! Beyond all that we could have asked or thought! "Like Him!"—what more could we ask? "Like Him" whom God hath highly exalted "Far above all principality and power and might and dominion, and every name that is named!" (Eph. 1:21) We stand amazed at such grace! Moreover, we can realize that he who called us to become "partakers of the divine nature" and joint-heirs with the Redeemer in his mediatorial kingdom has provided for our every comfort and joy in that heavenly state, the details of which we may not now grasp. Prophetically of these it is written, "I shall be satisfied, when I awake with thy likeness."—Psa. 17:15.

It is the hope, the desire, the aim of every one of us to make our calling and election sure—to so run that we may obtain that great "prize" of participation in the first resurrection. Of that resurrection we read, "Blessed and holy is he hath part in the first [chief] resurrection; on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years." (Rev. 20:6) Let us have this in mind, dear friends, that our participation with our Lord in the glories of the kingdom is dependent upon our faithfulness here in following him through evil report and through good report; through honor and through dishonor; in the bearing of the cross along the way of self-denial.

THE FIRST-BORNS PASSED OVER

When God would bring typical Israel out of Egypt, the first-borns had a peculiar salvation, or preservation, first. The night before the deliverance all the first-borns were in danger of death, and were saved only when under the blood of the passover lamb. We see the significance of this beautiful type. St. Paul tells us that Christ is our Passover Lamb, slain for us. We each have appropriated his flesh, his human nature, which he sacrificed on our behalf. We recognize his sacrifice, the blood of Atonement. We see that this entire Gospel age is the antitype of that night. We are hoping to belong to the first-borns (begotten of the holy Spirit) who, during this night-time of sin and death, will be passed over and, on account of the blood without and the lamb within, be accounted worthy of being passed over—accounted worthy

of eternal life on the spirit plane as members of the church of the first-born—participants in the first resurrection, to glory, honor and immortality, with our Lord and like him.

All of the first-borns of Israel passed over typified all of the Lord's people, in all denominations and outside of all denominations, who are now passing from death unto life. In the type, however, the first-borns of every tribe were exchanged for the one tribe of Levi—the priestly tribe—which thereafter typified the church of the first-borns—the "household of faith." Further, the Lord divided that tribe into two classes. A little handful were made priests and occupied a special position of favor and relationship and nearness to God. The remainder of that tribe were honored in being used as the assistants or servants of the priests. This is an allegory, or type.

The church of the first-borns will consist of two classes, a "little flock" of priests, and a "great company" of the "household of faith," antitypical Levites, who will serve. The "little flock" of priests do their sacrificing now and, if faithful, will shortly be made a royal priesthood, a reigning priesthood, joint-heirs with the great King of Glory and High Priest of our profession—Jesus. The "great company," however, typed in the ordinary Levites, will not be in the throne, but serve before the throne. They will not be "living stones" of the temple, but will serve God in the temple. They will not wear crowns of glory, though they will be granted palms of victory.

Which place will you or I occupy in the resurrection, in the General Assembly of the church of the first-borns? Shall we be of the royal priesthood, or of the less honorable, but still blessed servants? Shall we be of the bride class, or of the less honored "virgins, her companions, that follow her"?

It is for us to make our calling and election sure by our zeal, our earnestness, our devotion to the great King and his cause. He has called us to the highest plane of existence. It rests with us, under his wonderful and gracious arrangements, to determine whether we shall be passed over or not passed over; and if passed over, to determine whether we shall accept the place to which we are called, or the inferior place, which will be granted to those who do not keep their garments unspotted from the world and who, therefore, must come through "great tribulation" in order to enter into the kingdom at all.

We exhort, therefore, that we strive, not only to be present at the great convention, the "general assembly of the church of the first-borns," but to make our "calling and election sure," that we may be of the bride class, the royal priesthood class, the members of the body of the great Prophet, Priest and King of Glory! Let us encourage each other and be encouraged to maintain the good fight of faith, and to gain the victory, so far as our hearts are concerned, over the world, the flesh and the adversary. Let us be so filled with the spirit of truth, the spirit of meekness, gentleness, patience, long-suffering, brotherly-kindness and love, that we shall be a blessing to those in our homes, that they may take knowledge of us that we have been with Jesus and have learned of him; and that this blessing may thus overflow and abound to many hearts.

BURNING AND SHINING LIGHTS

One of old was declared to be "a burning and a shining light." There is force in this expression. Some lights are cold, austere, unsympathetic; but the kind approved of the Master was the burning kind—warm, glowing, sympathetic, helpful, intensive! The Master himself furnishes the best of all illustrations of the principle enunciated. He was the Light which came down from heaven—undimmed, resplendent, shining forth to the utmost the light of divine truth! Not a cold, forbidding recluse was he, holding himself aloof from the people with a haughty and disdainful spirit, telling coldly "Wonderful words of life." On the contrary, his entire life was sympathetic, whole-souled. One of the charges brought against him by the cold Pharisees was, "He receiveth sinners and eateth with them." Even his disciples were shocked that he should converse with a woman of Samaria. But the common people heard him gladly. While recognizing that he was far above their plane—while beholding in him the glories of the "Only-begotten of the Father," they nevertheless were drawn to him because he was the burning as well as the shining light. And they declared, "Never man spake like this man."—John 7:46.

Bible students are all Christians; though, alas! all "Christians" are not Bible students. True, God's Book may even be read through by some who are unbelievers; and it may be scanned critically by opponents who seek to find fault with it and to entrap it, as they sought to find fault with the Master. These, however, are not Bible students in the proper sense of the word. Only those who have made a consecration of their lives to the Lord and are anxious to know the divine will that they may conform their lives to it, and who, to attain this end, have entered the school of Christ to be taught of him—only these are Bible students from our standpoint, searchers after the secrets of the Lord, because they love him, and are appreciative of his glorious plans and desirous of understanding them fully.

Such Bible students should be burning and shining lights in the world and amongst our fellow-Christians of all denominations, many of whom, alas! have much of the spirit of the world and are lacking in the spirit of the truth itself—because they are not sufficiently Bible students.

"Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works and glorify your Father which is in heaven." We are not enjoined to make a show of carrying our Bibles everywhere in an ostentatious manner. We are exhorted to show forth in our daily lives the lessons we learn from its precious pages. As the Bible is the Lamp provided by the Lord to all those who walk in his footsteps, so each of these in turn is a lamp which should shine forth upon others the light, the knowledge, the Spirit of the truth, for their satisfaction. In other words, the holy Spirit is not poured out upon the world of mankind, but merely upon the Lord's servants and hand-maidens. It is an anointing for these, and upon these, evidencing to them that they have been begotten again, to the new nature, and making of them light-bearers for the benefit of others—burning and shining lights, sympathetic and helpful lights, "that they might show forth the praises of him who hath called them out of darkness into the marvelous light."

"THE LIGHT SHINETH IN DARKNESS"

While keeping the lamp trimmed and burning—while seeking to glorify God as burning and shining lights in the world, we must not forget that the Bible assures us that we shall be no more successful in converting the world than was our Master. His great light shone in darkness, "and the darkness comprehended it not." And the religionists of his day instigated his crucifixion.

The Master's prophecy concerning His followers will prove true to the end of the age. The darkness hateth the light. "Marvel not, my brethren, if the world hate you"; "If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you." (1 John 3:13; John 15:18) It is altogether a mistake, therefore, to suppose that the Lord's consecrated people, letting their light shine faithfully before men, could convert the world. Such was not God's intention. It is the church, not the world, that is being tested at the present time. The opposition of the world and all the powers of darkness serve to test us as new creatures—to test our loyalty to God and to his truth.

Whosoever receives the light of truth intelligently must rejoice in it; and, rejoicing in it, he must let it shine out upon others, or, by covering his light with a bushel, he will demonstrate his lack of courage, lack of appreciation, lack of earnestness—qualities which the Lord is now specially seeking amongst those whom he has invited to be sharers with Jesus in the glories of the mediatorial kingdom about to be established amongst men. It is important, therefore, that we let our light shine before men; that we be willing, nay, glad, if need be, to suffer for our loyalty to the Lord and to his message. And we have his Word for it that whoever is ashamed of him or of his Word now, of such he will be ashamed by and by. He will not own them as members of his bride class, will not accept them as assistants with him in his glorious throne.

"The Light of the world is Jesus"; "That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world." (John 1:9) Thus far Jesus has not been dealing with the world, but merely with the blessed ones who have the eye of faith and the ear of faith. "Blessed are your eyes, for they see; and your ears, for they hear." (Matt. 13:16) The time for the enlightenment of the world will be after the special call of the elect. Then the church, as the bride, will be with the heavenly Bridegroom in his throne. Then all now found faithful in the matter of letting their light shine will be associated with the great Light, Jesus, as members of his body. Altogether they will constitute the great Sun of Righteousness, which will then arise with healing in its beams for the blessing of all the families of the earth; "Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father; who hath ears to hear, let him hear." (Matt. 13:43) He that hath a desire of heart, let him be obedient and thus make his "calling and election sure" to this glorious, chief salvation.

"A SAVIOR AND A GREAT ONE"

[Reprint of January 15, 1894, which please see.]

WHAT CONSTITUTES SPIRITUAL-MINDEDNESS?

"To be spiritually-minded is life and peace."—Rom. 8:6.

Ability to understand the Scriptures, to talk fluently upon them and to expound them clearly is a qualification which we think should follow in the wake of spiritual-mindedness; but some might be able to expound Scripture very well, and to express truths in very good form who are not necessarily very spiritually-minded. A parrot can repeat certain words and phrases; but no one would accuse a parrot of being spiritually-minded. So there are some people who can repeat certain spiritual truths, apparently with a good deal of zest.

To be spiritually-minded is to have a mind in harmony with the Spirit of God, and fully surrendered to the divine will—fully consecrated to the Lord. It would not be enough merely to have a preference for good, saying, "I prefer not to do any gross sin; I prefer to live a life that will be honest and decent." This attitude would not be spiritual-mindedness. Adam was not spiritually-minded, but in his perfection he had a mind to do right. He had the mind of God in the sense that he had a balanced mind, not one having a preference for sin, or one that was weak. He was sound-minded and could appreciate things from the standpoint of righteousness and justice. But even in his perfection Adam had not a spiritual mind in the highest, or Scriptural sense of the word.

In Romans 8:6 the Apostle Paul uses the expression "spiritually-minded" in describing a certain class who have become followers of Christ, who have made a full consecration of their lives to the Lord and who, in harmony with this consecration, have been begotten of the holy Spirit. These are spiritually-minded. These are granted a spiritual insight into divine things.

OUR LORD BECAME SPIRITUALLY-MINDED AT JORDAN

This was true of our Lord Jesus. Having left the glory which he had with the Father, and having humbled himself to take the human nature, he was found in fashion as a man. We read that he was not an imperfect man, but "holy, harmless, undefiled and separate from sinners." (Heb. 7:26) Yet with all these special qualities he did not have the spiritual mind to which the Apostle has reference. Our Lord had a mind such as Adam had before the fall—a mind in perfect harmony, perfectly balanced. Our Lord received the spiritual mind, however, at the moment when he was begotten of the Spirit, when he made full consecration at baptism, and as a consequence the holy Spirit descended and lighted upon him in bodily form like a dove.

Following that begetting, the Lord had an enlargement of understanding and was granted to see certain deep things of God which he had not seen before his consecration; so we read in that very connection that "the heavens were opened" to him—the higher things became clear to him—the more spiritual things. These things St. Paul calls "the deep things of God." "The natural man," St. Paul says [the natural man would be a perfect man; fallen man is imperfect, unnatural], "receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, ... neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." 1 Cor. 2:14. Then he proceeds to s: that we have received the Spirit of God through the begetting of the holy Spirit; and that having the new mind, this spirit begetting, we are enabled to understand the deep things of God. "The things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God; and we have received . . . . the Spirit which is of God, that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God." Thus to us is it given to know the deep things of God.—1 Cor. 2:11, 12.

NO NATURAL MAN IS SPIRITUALLY-MINDED

So, then, the one who has been begotten of the holy Spirit is spiritually-minded. He sees things from the new standpoint which God specially brings to the attention of the spirit begotten. As the Apostle John says, "Ye have an unction from the Holy One, and ye all know it." (1 John 2:20) Whoever receives this begetting of the holy Spirit, this anointing, has an understanding of heart and of mind which is different from that which any natural man would have, a quality that will progress with him. He has the privilege of growing in grace and in knowledge and in the appreciation of the deep things of God; and he should grow.

The Apostles Peter and Paul go on to explain (1 Peter 2:2, 3; Heb. 5:13, 14; 6:1, 2) that one thus begotten of the Spirit of God is at first only a babe, and, as a babe, should desire the sincere milk of the Word—the first principles of the doctrine of Christ; but as he goes on, he should feed upon the strong meat of God's Word. Some of those who have the begetting of the Spirit may be blessed with the special gift of language, so that they can make the matter very clear to others; some others who have also received the begetting of the Spirit may not be blessed with this gift. But all certainly would have the desire to tell forth the blessings which they have received from the Lord, that others might know and might glorify God in their bodies and spirits, which are his.

As these spiritually-minded ones would thus endeavor to tell the good tidings, we have no doubt whatever that the Lord's blessing upon them would more and more qualify them as ambassadors and representatives, that they might tell the Message to others—if not in one form, then in another. We have noted, however, that some who speak with stammering lips have sometimes accomplished very wonderful things, while some with a great deal of eloquence have failed to obtain the same results. The victory is not always to the strong nor to the swift; for the Lord may grant his blessing with the feebly spoken word, particularly if the whole life be in harmony with the message given out.

We have been surprised at times to find that some who have apparently considerable understanding of spiritual things, in the sense of being able to tell about them, do not always give the best evidence in their lives that they really have the Spirit of the Lord. Sometimes in their private lives there is that which is quite contradictory. This condition surprises us; causes us to wonder how it is that those who apparently understand the Truth should be without the power, or manifestation of the power of the truth in their daily lives. We should bear in mind that whoever speaks the words of the Lord with his mouth, should uphold it in his every act, thought, in private life as well as in public.

THE LIFE NOT THE WORDS, A TRUE INDEX

The Truth should be the standard. Everything else is certainly quite contrary to the divine will; and that person who fails to uphold the truth in his daily life gives evidence that he has not the Spirit of the Lord in the proper degree. If, therefore, any of us should find that in our daily lives we have not been living in conformity with the message of our lips, it would be a matter of serious concern, for we cannot doubt that whoever is out of harmony with the Lord in his heart, will sooner or later get out of harmony in his utterances.

We think, therefore, that if in a congregation of the Lord's people any one were proposed as an elder or a deacon who outwardly had ever so great ability as a teacher, but who did not in his daily life give good evidence of being fully consecrated to the Lord, and of seeking to walk, not after the flesh, but after the Spirit, he should be regarded as a very dangerous person to put into the high position of elder or deacon. The sooner he is left quite by himself the better. For the more such people are put forward in public, the worse it will be for them and for the congregation whom they are supposed to serve.

LABORERS IN THE HARVEST

MARK. 1:14-28.—MARCH 3.

TEXT:—*"The harvest truly is plenteous, but the laborers are few. Pray ye, therefore, the Lord of the Harvest, that he will send forth laborers into his harvest."*—Matthew 9:37, 38.

Everywhere the New Testament teaches that the work done by Jesus and his apostles amongst the Jews eighteen centuries ago was a harvesting work. Thus Jesus said, "I send you forth to reap that upon which you have bestowed no labor. Other men labored and ye have entered into their labors"—ye are reapers of the fruits of their labors—gatherers of the "harvest" of the fruitage of the Jewish age.

The ripe characters of that dispensation were ready to receive Messiah and his message upon terms of full devotion of their time, talents, influence and lives as servants of the new institution—the New Covenant—which God purposes to inaugurate with Israel in due time, and under which all the families of the earth will be blessed. The service of the present time is sacrificial—the preparation of the royal priesthood, after the order of Melchizedec, to stand as Mediator between God and men—the world.

The labors of Jesus and the apostles found about five hundred brethren worthy of the garnering during His ministry. Subsequently, at Pentecost and after, several thousand more Jews were harvested—brought into the spirit dispensation—begotten of the holy Spirit as new creatures, members of the Body of the Anointed, members of the royal priesthood. But

of these there were not a sufficient number to complete the divine foreordination; hence, after all the "Israelites indeed" had been harvested, the Jewish people were thrust aside from divine favor for a time, and God's message of grace was sent to the Gentiles, "to take out of them a people for his name"—to be associated with the Jews as members of the great Mediator of the New Covenant, under the Headship of the glorified Christ.

GOSPEL OF THE KINGDOM

Today's lesson relates to our Lord's inauguration of the "harvest" work amongst the Jews. John the Baptist and his disciples had preached and baptized many under the announcement that the kingdom of God was at hand, and that all desirous of participating in its great blessings should come into full harmony with the Mosaic law, and thus be prepared to be transferred from typical Israel to antitypical Israel—from membership in Moses, the type, to membership in Christ, the Antitype. In due time the preaching of John the Baptist was brought to a close—when Herod cast him into prison. From that time onward Jesus and his disciples became more prominent, but their Message was the same as John's; as we read, "Jesus came to Galilee preaching the kingdom of God and saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent ye, and believe the Gospel." Whoever believed this message recognized Jesus as the "Sent of God," the Messiah, who, in God's due time, will be the King of Israel, and the monarch of the earth. "The time is fulfilled" meant that the foreordained time when the offer of the kingdom would be made unto the Jewish nation had arrived.

But God foreknew that Israel would not be ready—that only a few would be prepared to become the bride of the Messiah, his associate in the kingdom work, and that it would require eighteen centuries to select the remainder from amongst the Gentiles.

Hence St. Paul points out in Romans 9, 10 and 11 that the prophets foretold the stumbling of Israel, their temporary rejection as a nation, the fact that a remnant of them would be the nucleus of the bride class, and that the remainder would be made up of Gentiles. St. Paul declares, "Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh, but the election obtained it and the rest were blinded"—"until the fulness of the Gentiles has come in" and the "elect" class is completed.

However, God proceeded with his portion of the proposition just as though he had not known in advance the course the Israelites would take. The Gospel was preached to them first and all the saintly ones were found in advance of any move being made to open the door of this special favor to the Gentiles.

"TO BECOME FISHERS OF MEN"

The wisdom of God is foolishness with men, and the wisdom of men is foolishness with God—say the Scriptures. This is exemplified in our Lord's choice of the twelve apostles, the calling of four of whom is noted in this study: Simon, Andrew, James and John. However able they were as men, they lacked the polish or education which people were accustomed to expect in religious teachers. The Bible record of them is, "People perceived that they were ignorant and unlearned men."

This reminds us that the Apostle declared that this "high calling" of God to joint-heirship with Jesus reached and influenced merely the poor of this world, rich in faith; that amongst the "elect" will be found "not many great, not many rich, not many wise, not many learned, not many noble." (1 Cor. 1:26, 27) Success in life leads to more or less of self-confidence, self-esteem, self-will, whereas the Gospel message appeals to those who feel their own weakness and imperfection and unworthiness, and who correspondingly with great earnestness lay hold upon the divine promise—the divine aid, giving God the glory.

The words of Jesus, "Woe unto you rich" (in wisdom, property, fame, in learning, in nobility of character) must not be understood to mean that the great, noble, wise and rich are all or nearly all condemned to eternal torment, or to any punishment, on account of their riches of education, character, etc.

Rather, we must remember the standpoint of the Great Teacher's message—"Woe unto you" as respects the kingdom—you are less likely to gain this wonderful "high calling" of God than if you were in humbler circumstances. You have your consolation now, and correspondingly have less interest in the glorious things of God's message. You are so well satisfied with the things of this present life that it will be the more difficult for you to sacrifice all these for the prospect of a share in Messiah's kingdom. But, said the Master, "Blessed are you who are poor in spirit," humble-minded, and therefore the more teachable, for the more you will look out for the great Gift of God—the "pearl of great price," a share in the kingdom of God's dear Son.

TAUGHT AS ONE HAVING AUTHORITY

The first five verses of our study tell how the fishermen forsook their earthly all for the prospect of sharing with Messiah in his kingdom. Verse 21 shows that the Redeemer was recognized in Capernaum as a great Teacher and a man of learning, to whom others gave place in the synagogue; and the people marveled, saying, "How knoweth this man letters, having never learned at school?"

Moreover, they were astonished at his teaching, "for he taught them as one having authority and not as the scribes." The Jewish scribes and rabbis then, as today, were evidently quite perfunctory and quite unable to give the people any understanding of the teachings of the law and the prophecies. Jesus had a thorough grasp of the Sword of the Spirit, the Word of God, and his applications and interpretations therefore were convincing to his hearers.

Had the scribes and Pharisees and priests accepted him, the whole nation would have done so. But this would not have outworked the divine program. Hence the Master's works and teachings were largely parabolical and in dark sayings, because it was the divine intention that only the saintly Jews should fully appreciate the Teacher and become His followers. The same principle, under God's providence, has applied to the message and the messengers of the kingdom throughout the entire Gospel age. Hence at no time has the real message been attractive to any except the saintly—others were content with forms of godliness devoid of power and out of accord with the Word.

EVEN DEMONS OBEY HIM

While Jesus was teaching in the Capernaum synagogue a young man, obsessed by a demon, "an unclean spirit," cried out. The demon recognized Jesus and his teaching and used the young man as his mouthpiece, his medium, saying, "Art thou come to destroy us? I know thee who thou art, the Holy One of God."

The demons cast out of human beings by our Lord and the Apostles, the Bible tells us, were once holy angels. They fell from divine favor through their sinful relationship to humanity in the days of Noah. (Gen. 6:1-5) These fallen spirit beings still desire human relationship, and are styled "unclean spirits," because, however they may begin by presenting themselves as angels of light, they later reveal their true characters by unchaste, impure suggestions.

As St. Paul refused to allow a young woman medium to proclaim him and Silas servants of God (Acts 16:16-18), so Jesus refused to allow this demon to give testimony respecting himself—even though it was complimentary. He commanded the demon to come out of the man. In leaving the man the demon caused him great pain so that he cried aloud. The effect upon the congregation at the synagogue was amazement. Not only the teachings of Jesus captivated them, but also his power to deal with the evil spirits, corroborating his authority as a Teacher sent from God. His fame began to spread throughout all the region of Galilee.

DRIVEN INTO THE WILDERNESS

February 25.—Mark 1:9-11; Matt. 4:1-11.

"For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succor them that are tempted."—Heb. 2:18.

Our study for today is a most interesting one. It points to the time when Jesus reached the age of thirty and consequently was permitted to offer himself without spot to God as the world's Sin-offering. Saint Paul quotes as applicable to him the words of the Prophet, "Lo, I come to do thy will, oh God," as it is written in the volume of the book concerning me. I now present myself to be the antitype, the fulfiller, of every prophecy that divine wisdom has caused to be recorded, and the antitype of every feature of the law applicable to me.

There the Redeemer became the antitypical Passover Lamb, the antitypical bullock of the Atonement Day Sin-offering. There he gave up his life to the doing of the Father's will; there he as the man Jesus died; there he as the antitypical bullock was slain; there he was begotten of the holy Spirit and became the antitypical Priest—the Sacrificer. Through the following three and a half years of his ministry he carried out this consecration and completed it at Calvary, crying, "It is finished!"

LED OF THE SPIRIT—INTO TEMPTATION

When Jesus received the begetting of the holy Spirit at his baptism it was the begetting to the divine nature, and with it came great enlightenment to his mind, as represented in the words, "And the heavens were opened unto him," literally, rent asunder. Forthwith he could see clearly into the divine arrangements and purposes respecting himself in a manner not possible to him prior to his consecration. And so it is with all those who follow in his steps. The deep things of God are revealed to them gradually, as they are able to receive them, but never until after they have made their consecration vows to the Lord. With his followers as with himself, the trial or temptation or testing as to loyalty comes more particularly after consecration than before. Hence the importance of Jesus' injunction: "Sit down first and count the cost."—Luke 14:28-33.

But with us as with Jesus the Father provides not only a clearer appreciation of our trials and responsibilities, but also a clearer perception of the glories which will follow to the faithful. In Jesus' case the opening of the heavens—the enlightenment of his mind respecting the divine plan—was a much more wonderful matter than it is with us, because with his perfection of brain and of heart he was able to realize instantly the lengths and breadths and heights and depths of his undertaking, in a manner only partially attained by us after years of progress and study. At once the Master realized the full import of the Day of Atonement sacrifices, of the Passover Lamb slain, of the prophecies that spoke of himself as being led as a lamb to the slaughter, and of the type which pictured him as the antitype of the brazen serpent, lifted on high for the healing of Adam's sin-bitten race.

As these thoughts began to rush into the Savior's mind, he was first of all pressed of the spirit (his own spirit or mind) to go apart for awhile and to study out afresh the full import of the law and the prophets and his own obligations according to the covenant he had just made. For forty days and nights his intense earnestness made him oblivious to almost everything else. Apparently he neither ate nor slept until the forty days were ended; and he "afterward hungered." Then it was that the adversary appeared as a tempter—at the moment of his physical weakness as the result of fasting—at the moment when his soul was overwhelmed with the realization of the importance of the great contract he had made and of what it would cost him to fulfil its terms. It was the severest test imaginable. Would the Redeemer prove himself loyal to God—to the divine program—to his covenant of consecration, unto death. Or would he feel that the Father had poured too bitter a cup for him—that God had made the tests of loyalty and obedience too severe—that it was neither just nor loving to allow him to enter into such a contract?

How glad we are to note the loyalty which triumphed over every temptation! With the angels we acclaim, "Worthy is the Lamb who was slain!" Not merely in the sense of consecrating his will, but in maintaining his full submission and deadness, according to the flesh, faithfully even to Calvary and the death of the cross. To him be glory, honor, dominion and might everlasting!

TEMPTED AS WE ARE

The Savior was not tempted with the habits of a drunkard nor with the weaknesses of a debauchee or a libertine, neither are those the temptations which come to us—his footstep followers. We are to remember that the Scriptures clearly differentiate between us and the world: "Ye are not of the world even as I am not of the world." "Tempted like as we are" therefore signifies that the temptations or trials which Jehovah permits to come upon his consecrated people are of the same kind that he permitted to come upon our Redeemer.

It is important, therefore, that we notice the character of our tests. God is not testing us to see whether or not our flesh is perfect, for he knew all along that amongst men there is none righteous, no, not one. The Father's tests for those whom he receives as sons are tests of loyalty to him, loyalty to the principles of righteousness, loyalty to the truth, loyalty to the divine methods—a refusal to take our own way or to seek our own glory or our own ease at the expense of truth or of the divine method.

JESUS' THREE TEMPTATIONS

When the Master was weakened, through fasting, at the end of the forty days of Bible study, the adversary appeared—not as an enemy and a fiend of darkness, but as a friend, "as an angel of light." (2 Cor. 11:13-15) Professing interest in the Savior's welfare and an interest also in his work, he said, You are hungry, man, and unnecessarily so. Do you not know that the holy power which came upon you forty days ago is more than sufficient for your every need? Do you not know that now you may command even these stones to be made bread, and therefore have no need to be hungry? Do so, at once, please, before we have a conversation, for I have a great interest in you. I remember you well from the long ago when we were in fellowship, before my deflection.

But Jesus replied, The power received was not to be used for ministering to my own flesh. It was received, rather, because I had made a consecration of my flesh to death. The divine power which I possess I may use in any manner for the Father's glory, but not for self-gratification, however apparently legitimate. Besides, my eternal life is not dependent upon bread, nor upon the maintenance of this physical body. Rather, my hope is in God and in his promise that, if faithful in the use of this holy power which he has committed to me—if faithful in my consecration unto death—he will give me a crown of life—glory, honor, immortality.

That temptation failing, Satan tried another. We assume that he took our Lord in mind to Jerusalem and the temple, saying, If you will go to the pinnacle of the temple and cast yourself down therefrom, it will be a means of proving to the people that you are the Son of God, and it will be the quickest method by which you can convince them of your mission and gain their adherence and loyalty and make them your disciples and thus accomplish your mission. I will quote you the prophecy in proof that this was God's intention for you: "He shall give his angels a charge concerning thee and in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest thou dash thy foot against a stone." (Psalm 91:12) But Jesus declined this proposition also.

If he had been thrust off the Temple pinnacle by the hands of an angry mob before his time was come, surely the Father's power would have interfered that he should not be injured; but to deliberately defy the laws of nature and to expect divine protection from the natural consequences of his own course would have been to tempt God; this Jesus refused to do.

The third temptation also was a mental presentation. A high mountain, in symbol, is a high kingdom. From no mountain on earth could all the kingdoms of the world be seen, since the world is round; but Satan's own kingdom was called to the attention of Jesus. Satan said, "You realize, of course, that I am the prince of this world, that I am the God of this world and that I now have practical control, through ignorance and superstition, of the masses. I have a proposition to make to you. I confess to you that I am weary of the reign of sin and death which has progressed in the world because of my domination. I would rather share the kingdom and have it uplifted and blessed. In other words, I propose to you a federation—that together we shall unite in the bringing of humanity out of sin and death conditions. What do you say? I on the spirit plane and you on the human plane will be quite masters of the situation, for you see I have the power in my hand and can easily turn the thing to our favor and quickly the world will be blessed. Thus you will attain the glorious consummation of your hopes, and that without the awful trials, sufferings, experiences, etc., which you are now anticipating through following God's arrangement outlined in the prophecies. Come, let us federate and co-operate. Speedily I will turn things your way; victory will begin to come from the very hour of our federation!

Our Lord was indignant that it should be thought for a moment that, having left the heavenly glory to do the Father's will, he would now prove traitor to his covenant, and for fear of the cross and the shame and the death he would enter into a confederacy with the great Arch-enemy of righteousness—Satan. He answered, "Get thee hence, Satan, for it is written: Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve." I will not serve you nor co-operate with you in any sense of the word. "Then the devil leaveth him." So far as we know, Satan never thought it worth while to return to the attack on the Savior. Then by divine arrangement angels came to the famished Overcomer and ministered unto him—strengthened him, revived him.

The Lord's followers are to note how these same temptations are the very ones by which the adversary assails them: (1) He would be their friend and helper and would thereby induce them to violate their covenant of sacrifice by requests for physical healing, physical blessings, which they have agreed to sacrifice. (2) He would suggest to them some wild, foolish way of capturing the world for God by some great exploits or prayer tests. (3) He would have them compromise with the world and its spirit and its methods by church federation and otherwise. We are to resist the adversary courageously that he may leave us permanently, seeing no hope of winning us.

INTERESTING QUESTIONS

USE DISCRETION AND WISDOM

Question.—We are told that from him who would borrow of us we should not turn away. (Matt. 5:42) How shall we understand this?

Answer.—There is nothing in this Scripture that says that we should lend to everybody who wishes to ask for a loan, either of goods or money; but we should not turn away with a deaf ear from those in need. The Scriptures say, Do good and lend, hoping for no recompense. (Luke 6:35) We should also have that beneficent disposition which desires to do good to all men, especially those of the household of faith. But we should use discretion and wisdom. Often the very best thing to do to a person is to lend him something, even if sure that he would not return it; for thus the way to his coming any more would be barred to some extent at least.

WE FIND WHAT WE SEEK

Question.—Please give the meaning of the text, "Seek and ye shall find."—Mark 7:7.

Answer.—The above text illustrates a principle to which we have frequently called attention. We find what we seek! Those who approach the Bible with earnest desire to find in it God's message, will be guided of the Lord. As it is written, "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness [truth], for they shall be filled."—Matt. 5:6.

On the other hand, those who approach the Bible from the standpoint of cavil, unbelief, antagonism, are equally sure to find what they seek—flaws, contradictions, etc. Note how Thomas Paine and Robert Ingersoll illustrated this principle; and compare their experiences and findings with the blessedness of those who feast upon the Bible as the Lord's bountifully spread table of good things—"Meat in due season" for "the household of faith."—Luke 12:42.

The same principle holds true with the SCRIPTURE STUDIES. As those who so desire can pick flaws with the Bible and turn and twist its statements into unreason, so the same class would surely be successful in similarly picking to pieces "The Divine Plan of the Ages."

"ONCE IN GRACE, ALWAYS IN GRACE," CONTRADICTED

Question.—What is meant by the Scripture which says that if one who has been righteous shall depart from his righteousness, his former righteousness shall not count, but that he shall die for his sin? And also the statement that one who was unrighteous and turned from his unrighteousness shall be saved?—Ezek. 33:13-16.

Answer.—This Scripture emphatically contradicts a doctrine held by some Christian people, "Once in grace, always in grace"; or that one who has been favored of God can never lose his favor. The principle of this Scripture applies, at the present time, to those who pass from death unto life as new creatures. They are on trial for life or death. Adamic sin no longer counts in their cases. If they remain faithful to the Lord they will get the blessing of eternal life; if unfaithful, they will die. If one should make a covenant with God and then fail to keep that covenant, he would lose his covenant-relationship with God as soon as he abrogated the contract. If we are faithful, he will be faithful in giving us life eternal.

But this Scripture specially applies to the Millennial age; for at that time all are to be brought to an opportunity for life everlasting. People will then realize that "the wages of sin is death." Then it will no longer be a proverb that the parents have eaten a sour grape and the children's teeth are set on edge, but each "shall die for his own iniquity." (Jer. 31:29; Ezek. 18:2) There will be a test for life or death, just as there is now with the church. Only those who are faithful in their trial will be granted everlasting life, in either case. All others will be cut off in death.

"HE THAT JUDGETH ME IS THE LORD"

Question.—Suppose one addicted to the use of tobacco and who began to realize its filthiness should resolve to discontinue it and should really desist from using it for a time, but later should resume the occasional use of it, and thus did not conquer in the matter, the spirit being willing, but the flesh being weak—would this cause the loss of the crown and relegate such an one to the "great company"—or might it lead to the second death?

Answer.—The use of tobacco is a very filthy habit; and there are other habits that are esteemed filthy by some people, but not by others. We are not to draw any line which the Bible does not draw. It is not, therefore, for any of God's people to judge another in the meat offered to idols, or in the chewing of tobacco, or in any such matters. We should encourage each other in cleanliness of life. To our understanding, no one would be condemned to death for not controlling the tobacco habit or the coffee habit or the morphine habit. God alone knows how each is struggling; he alone knows those who are fighting courageously day by day to the end. We are not competent to judge. St. Paul says, "With me it is a very small thing that I should be judged of you, or of any man's judgment; yea, I judge not mine own self. . . . He that judgeth me is the Lord." (1 Cor. 4:3, 4) We may not even too hastily judge ourselves to be worthy of the second death. It is to be left to God as to whether we are overcomers or not. With this in view it is our duty to strive earnestly and not to be discouraged ourselves nor to discourage others, but rather to uphold them and help them to greater courage, to greater zeal in the service of our Lord.

SOME INTERESTING LETTERS

BLESSINGS OF COLPORTEUR SERVICE

DEAR BROTHER:—

I want to tell you in just a few words how very many blessings our dear heavenly Father is bestowing on me in the little service I am privileged to render him. I have been drawn so close to the Lord in my work, and am daily relying more on his help, looking for his leadings, and trusting his providences. It is so blessed to be close to the Master, to see and feel his guiding hand, and realize his presence. How sweet prayer becomes, and how precious the communion with him!

I have lately made six calls on interested ones, and hope to find more. It seems a mere coincidence, but I know it is God's hand, that when I give my canvass, often not even mentioning the Bible Society (for some are ever alert to prejudice), the first thing I know people take me in and show me the STUDIES, which perchance are in their bookcases. They seem somehow to associate us. Of course, I first draw them out, then I can more wisely, perhaps, make comments. I have three or four parties in mind that I have just found these last two weeks; they have become aroused and interested.

We have no large class here, but are served from Dayton, bi-weekly, and meet for study semi-weekly. I shall urge our class to give public meetings, perhaps a series, shortly, for these people want to come.

I can see that all Christians are more or less, even unconsciously, absorbing the kingdom message, and other co-related matters, as given out by our dear Pastor, no doubt through the sermons and PEOPLES PULPIT distributed. And some are so truth-hungry! They confess themselves that there is a true famine in the land for the Word of God. I tell you we still have opportunities and find receptive hearts. Praise the Lord!

One peculiar case we have found is a good, intelligent man who has read all six volumes; he reads the Bible continually. (He bought a Bible, Manna and gave a TOWER subscription.) We invited him to class, but he believes the churches have done so much harm that Christians ought to stay apart and not meet in congregations. We will call on him and ask others, especially brethren, to do so.

One dear woman had one first volume of DAWN, and not knowing, even now, that I represented the same Society, confessed that about one or two years ago she ordered the other two volumes of a colporteur, but refused to take them when delivered. She said he was so nice about it, and it has troubled her ever since, so she had to confess to me. He told her he believed some day all would see the truth. This was evidently Brother Bryant Campbell, who now, we are sure, is with the Lord. He canvassed here at that time, and one Methodist minister persecuted him, and prejudiced the people against him and his work.

I thank you for your kind words of encouragement. The Lord bless you. Pray for me!

MRS. GEO. H. KELLER.—Ohio.

"PUT ON THE WHOLE ARMOR"

DEARLY LOVED PASTOR AND BROTHER IN THE LORD:—

With Christian greetings and a prayer of thanksgiving in my heart for this blessed privilege of fellowship, I wish to write to you for a little while. My dear husband wishes to be included in the spirit of this letter.

It is seldom that he and I have the pleasure of meeting our beloved Pastor, so, every once in a while the desire to write you an expression of tender, Christian love becomes so great that the heart will no longer retain it, and out it comes at the end of this pen!

If, partially, the consequence be an encroachment upon your time, I know you will forgive, as our dear, gracious Heavenly Father does when we make mistakes.

On your return from abroad we cannot greet you as some others who love you, but let this letter convey to you our glad, loving "Welcome home!"

And now, a few words relative to a little matter upon which I shall much appreciate having your opinion.

Twice, recently, I have met friends who are studying the Truth and show every evidence of love for it.

The question of Spiritism arose, and in each case the friend was not acquainted with the truth on this important Bible subject. I inquired, Would you not like the truth about this matter? Receiving an affirmative reply, I told the one—a brother—of the little book on SPIRITISM and he promised to read it, saying his thought had been to have absolutely nothing to do with the subject.

To the other—a sister—I loaned my own book with the same words, that in this "evil day" it is our business to follow what the dear Lord indicates is necessary to our salvation, namely, the putting on of the "whole armor that we may be able to stand" in this particularly evil period.

When next I met her she exclaimed, "O, Sister Erb, I could not read that awful book! I am sure that our Lord will never allow his children to come in contact in any way with anything so unholy as the demons." She quoted, "He will keep them, that that wicked one touch them not."

I have thought that possibly others are in doubt upon this subject so pregnant with awful possibilities—some, perhaps, who have recently embraced the true faith—and that a word of emphasis from yourself with respect to giving attention to the truth regarding Spiritism would be a help to them.

With one more prayer now, added to the many I have offered at the throne of heavenly grace on your behalf, I will close, hoping before very long to meet and greet you face to face.

Your sister, by the grace of our dear heavenly Father and through our dear Redeemer, MRS. JONATHAN R. ERB.—Pa.

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"WHAT IS MAN?"

"When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained, what is man, that thou art mindful of him, and the son of man, that thou visitest him? for thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honor; thou madest him to have dominion over the work of thy hands; thou hast put all things under his feet; all sheep and oxen, yea, and the beasts of the field, the fowl of the air, and the fish of the sea, and whatsoever passeth through the paths of the seas; O Lord, our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth!"—Psalm 8:3-9.

The suggestion of the prophet respecting man is one which we believe has occurred to every intelligent being. As one upon the deep looks out upon the vast expanse of water and the riding of the vessel upon it, he thinks, How little is man! How small a speck in the universe! When we look up into the heavens and realize that they represent so much more of divine power, we are still more surprised. When we consider the heavens, and realize that all these stars, except the planets which belong to our own system, are really suns, and that around each of these suns revolve planets, as our earth revolves around our sun, and when we think of the number of these suns and their planets, we are amazed, and we feel our own littleness all the more!

We ask astronomers as to the number of these suns, and they will tell you that there are a hundred millions of them in sight. And if we would average the planets around these hundred million suns at ten, it would be ten hundred millions of planets. And then they tell us, further, that if we could take our stand upon the very farthermost one of these we would still see before us many more, and as many more.

Our minds are appalled as we begin to think of the heavens, the work of God's fingers, and then consider man, how small a work in God's sight! We have an appreciation then of what the Scriptures say man is like in God's sight—as "the dust in the balance," that is not worthy to be taken into account. We have all been in the grocer's shop and notice that he pays no attention to the dust in the scoop of his scale. So man is so small in the sight of the great Creator that we wonder that God should have any interest at all in humanity.

"THOU MADEST HIM TO HAVE DOMINION"

Except for the Bible we should have no knowledge of God's interest in us, and we might think that God is so great that he would pay no heed to us. But, when God reveals himself to us in the Bible, we begin to see that there is not only divine power exercised and manifested in the creation of all these worlds, but we see also this divine power manifested in God's dealings with us, and also the love of God, which the Scriptures state "passeth all understanding." What wonderful condescension on the part of the Creator that he should give heed to us!

But our text goes on to give us further information on this subject: "What is man that thou art mindful of him, and the son of man that thou visiteth him? for thou hast made him a little lower than the angels." Only a little lower is the thought! Of the holy angels the Scriptures give us to understand there are various ranks, some higher and some lower, but all perfect. Then in the world we have various orders of animal life—the beast of the field, the fish of the sea, the fowl of the air—and man, as the highest of these earthly beings; and he stands related to all these lower creatures as God does to the entire universe, and this is the honor with which our great Creator endowed his human creatures!

Se we are told in this Psalm, "Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands; thou hast put all things under his feet." What a wonderful creature man is, then, from this standpoint! While he is a little lower than the angels, so far as his nature in connection with the earth is concerned, and whereas as angels are more excellent so far as their natures are concerned, this Psalm speaks of man as being superior in that he has a dominion. The angels do not have dominion over other angels, but all are subject to the great Creator, God.

But man, in the likeness of his Creator, has been given a dominion over the lower creatures, and in this respect it is a wonderful honor with which he has been crowned—"Thou crownedst him with the glory and honor, and hast set him over the works of thy hands."

It might be asked with great propriety, If God is thus careful of humanity and has so highly honored his human creatures, why should he not have made a still better preparation for them in the world? Why is it that they are subject to the unfavorable conditions under which they now exist? Why are there sorrow, pain, sighing, crying and dying? Why are these tempests, storms, cyclones and tornadoes, famine, drought and pestilence—why all these things if God is so careful of us as his creatures?

We would have no answer for all these questions were it not provided in the Bible. In this wonderful book of all books, we have the key to the matter, the explanation, and that is: God provided originally that man should be subject to none of these difficulties and disasters. Man was made perfect and placed in favorable and perfect surroundings, in a perfect garden, eastward in Eden, with everything necessary for his welfare—no storms, no sickness, no tempests, no difficulties—and he might have lived forever. Such was the wonderful dominion of this human son of God.

Why, then, the change? This wonderful book answers that the change came about because of sin. And so we read: "By one man's disobedience sin entered into the world (there was no sin in the world before), and death as a result of sin." (Rom. 5:12.) There was no dying on the part of man until sin came. So all the aches, pains, sorrows and sickness which we experience are parts of this dying process. And so the difficulty with us all is that by nature we are "children of wrath."

Is divine wrath eternal torture? No, indeed! That teaching was handed down to us, perhaps, by our well-meaning forefathers. The wrath of God, we see on every hand; as the Apostle Paul declares, "The wrath of God is revealed"—in our own bodies, our aches and pains, mental imperfections, physical imperfections and moral imperfections—these are all parts of this great penalty for sin. We read that when man became a transgressor God sent a holy angel to drive our first parents out from the Garden of Eden, away from the trees of life that were to sustain them in perfection, out into the unfinished earth.

While the whole earth could just as easily have been made perfect, God left it unfinished, unprepared for man, and merely "prepared a garden eastward in Eden" for the trial of

our first parents, because divine wisdom foresaw that man would sin; and instead of making the whole earth perfect, God left it in an imperfect condition, except the Garden of Eden. So we read that when God thrust our first parents out of the Garden of Eden, he said, "Cursed is the earth (not I will make it unfit, but it is already) for thy sake, thorns and thistles shall bring forth, and in the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread until thou return to the ground; for out of it wast thou taken, for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return."

In other words, the great penalty against our race is a death penalty—"Dying, thou shalt die." (Gen. 2:17) This has been upon our race for six thousand years, from the time that sin entered into the world. So all the pages of history from Adam's day to this are marked with sin and sorrow, pain and sighing, because we are all sinners; and because we are sinners, God is treating us according to his own purpose, "Dying, thou shalt die."

But this is the sad side of the matter. Is there no other side, is there no hope for us? The same blessed book—the Bible—tells us. The Gospel message, which signifies "good tidings," declares that God has some good message for those whom he condemned to death.

WHAT IS THE GOSPEL MESSAGE?

We inquire, What is the good message? The Scriptures answer that the good message is that he who condemned us as unfit for eternal life has provided for our redemption; that his Son became our Redeemer; that Christ died, the "just for the unjust," that he might bring all back into harmony with God. O, some may say, but did not Jesus die eighteen hundred or more years ago? Yes, truly. And have we not the same reign of sin and death as then? Yes. Where, then, is the blessing which was to come through Jesus? Well, we answer, a two-fold blessing has been provided. First of all, there is a blessing of hope, which some of God's people enjoy, a blessing of knowledge, that in God's "due time" he will bring in the wonderful things of which this Gospel message tells.

God having provided a Redeemer, there will be a resurrection of the dead; they shall not remain dead, but come forth. There shall be a new dispensation, a glorious morning, in which all sin and sorrow will be done away. So the Scriptures assure us of that time that there shall be no more sighing, no more crying, no more dying, because all the former things, all the things of sin, the things of death, will have passed away.

"THE CHURCH'S ONE FOUNDATION"

And, we inquire, who is so powerful as to overthrow sin and death, and lift up humanity and bring them back from sin and weakness and imperfection and death? The Bible answers this question, that the one who will do this is the Great One who sits upon the throne of God; as we read, "He that sitteth upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new!"

But who is this? Oh, the very same one, who, by the grace of God, became our Redeemer—Jesus. He is to be the great King of kings and Lord of lords, and is to "reign from sea to sea, and from river to river to the ends of the earth." And under the blessed influence of that kingdom the full blessing of God will come to the earth again! "All the blind eyes shall be opened, and all the deaf ears shall be unstopped." "The glory of the Lord shall be revealed and all flesh shall see it together." These are words of the prophets given to us for our hope and the strengthening of our hearts, that we might turn from sin and become more and more the children of God.

We have referred to the world and how it is to be blessed by the Messianic kingdom, the kingdom of God's dear son, the kingdom for which Jesus taught us to pray, "Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is done in heaven." But we see not all these things accomplished yet. We see not mankind brought back to perfection, nor the promise of the good tidings fulfilled amongst men. But we have a word from the Apostle upon this subject. He said, "But we see not yet all things put under man"; they are still out of harmony. But, says the Apostle, we see a beginning of God's work; we see Jesus, who, "by the grace of God, has tasted death for every man." We see more than that. More than eighteen hundred years have passed. Not only has Jesus tasted death, but a great many have been going into death, in answer to the call to be of the bride of Christ, the church of the first-born, to be associated with our Lord. This is the church we sing about in our hymn:—

"The church's one foundation,
Is Jesus Christ her Lord;
She is his new creation
By water and the Word.
From heaven he came and sought her
To be his holy bride;
With his own blood he bought her,
And for her life he died."

This, then, is the first work of God in the redemption of mankind—the gathering of the bride of Christ, the church, to share in his glory, honor and immortality. We hope to be of this class; and to this class belong the great promises that they shall share with him in the first resurrection, and then bless all the families of the earth with restitution. The world of mankind is to be restored to all that Adam had and lost, for all of which Jesus died at Calvary; and associated with him will be the church, called out of the world a saintly class who have been walking in the footsteps of Jesus; as we read again "Blessed and holy are they who have part in the first resurrection, on such the second death hath no power; they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years."—Rev. 20:6.

This will be the thousand years of Messiah's reign, the thousand years of the world's uplift, the thousand years in which Satan will be bound, the thousand years in which knowledge shall fill the whole earth, the thousand years in which the earth shall be brought to the Paradisaic condition, which was symbolically represented in the Garden of Eden—and when every creature in heaven and earth and under the earth shall be brought to that glorious condition where they will sing praises to God that sitteth upon the throne, and to the Lamb, for ever and ever.

And yet there is another side; for the same Scriptures which tell of the exaltation of the church to glory and the blessings of the world through the kingdom of Messiah, which tell that the earth will be the Paradise of God—these Scriptures also tell us of a class of incorrigibles who will be punished. After this class shall have been brought to a full knowledge of God and shall wilfully sin against divine light and blessings, the punishment against these will be, not eternal torment, but destruction from the presence of the Lord and the glory of his power.—2 Thess. 1:9.

THE FUTURE INHERITANCE OF THE NEW CREATION

"If children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ, if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together."—Romans 8:17.

The divine promise is that the kingdom of God will be amongst men—"under the whole heavens." The Scriptures state that both our Lord and the New Jerusalem, or glorious kingdom of Messiah, are to come down from heaven to earth; and they call our Lord, therefore, Immanuel (God with us). During that thousand years God will in this sense dwell with men, walk with men. We already have this to some extent in our experience as Christians. God is with men, and Christ and the church are with men, more or less contradicting and putting to shame the things of darkness of the present time.

But with all these suggestions it is not necessary for us to suppose that the kingdom will be earthly. On the contrary, the assurance of the Scriptures is that the church must become spirit beings before they can inherit the kingdom: "We shall all be changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye," while those of this class who have been previously dead will have an instantaneous resurrection; and thus we shall be "forever with the Lord"—not forever with the Lord on the earth, but always in the spirit condition. The angels are always in the heavenly condition, whether they are in heaven with the Father or on earth, and we shall always be in the heavenly condition—the spirit condition.

Nothing in the Scriptures indicates that there will be a restriction upon the church, that she should remain in one place more than another. The intimation seems to be that, after she shall have experienced her change, the church will be for a short time absent from the earth and in the presence of the heavenly Father. We read in the forty-fifth Psalm that the bride is to be brought into the presence of the Great King, arrayed in glorious clothing of wrought gold—"in raiment of needlework." The members of the body of Christ will all be on the spirit plane, whether they are afar off or near the earth. This is what our Lord meant when he said, "I go to prepare a place for you"—in the divine family. This particular place is one that has never been filled by any others.

The various orders of spirit beings created by the Father occupy each its own sphere. But there is no church of Christ amongst these. The church of Christ is invited to occupy a

place next to the Lord, next to the Father, higher than all the other planes of spirit beings. At the first advent this place had not been prepared for the church, although the Lord had it in mind. Our Lord ascended up on high to prepare this place. He did so by making an application of his merit to the church class, by imputing his merit to them and permitting them to become participators with him in his sufferings in the present time, that they might also become sharers with him in the divine nature. Thus he prepared the way to enter into that highest of all spirit planes, the divine.

We are not sufficiently informed respecting the spirit condition to know just how it would be possible for the Lord and the church to remain in the Father's presence and maintain the government of the earth. Perhaps this course is possible. Yet again, such would perhaps not be a wise arrangement. Perhaps it would be necessary for them to be absent from the immediate presence of the heavenly Father and to approximate the earth, just as with Satan and his angels, who are in tartarus—cast down, separate because of sin. But Satan is to be bound for a thousand years; and the position which he has occupied is to be vacated. The entire church is to be "caught up in the air" to be with the Lord forever—not necessarily in tartarus, but "forever with the Lord," that where he may be there they may be also, in harmony with the divine will, to execute the divine purposes.

Our thought, then, is that the Christ will be very closely associated with our earth, just as Satan's kingdom has been; and that they will be equally invisible to men, who will not see them during the thousand years, just as men have not seen Satan and his fallen angels. But as Satan and his angels have been doing an evil work, so Christ and his church will be doing a powerful work, a good work, a work on the spirit plane; and associated with them will be various agencies, one of which undoubtedly will be the "great company." The members of Christ are the ones that are mentioned as "kings and priests unto God," who shall reign on the earth.

THE EARTHLY PHASE—INTELLIGENT, WILLING MEN

Then there will be earthly agents of this kingdom, just as Satan has his agents, who are sometimes under his control through ignorance and superstition, sometimes from mesmeric power, all of which will be removed at that time. But the agents of Christ will be intelligent and willing. At that time the ancient worthies will be "Princes in all the earth." All mankind will gradually come into fellowship with the kingdom and, proportionately, indirectly, become associated with the kingdom itself. Just as any good man helps a government, so all mankind will be blessed in proportion as they approve and uphold the divine arrangements.

Thus the kingdom will be spreading for the thousand years, not only from one individual to another, but gradually bringing them back to full perfection. We read that "of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end." It will conquer everything before it. Nothing shall stop it. Every evil thing having been destroyed, every creature in heaven and on earth and under the earth will be heard praising God. Every knee will bow and every tongue confess; and his kingdom will be without an opponent "from the river unto the ends of the earth"—having accomplished its purpose.

The kingdom will then cease, in the sense that Christ will deliver the authority over to the Father. (1 Cor. 15:24-28) This does not mean that the law of God will be disregarded, as it has been during the reign of sin and death. To meet the exigencies of the fallen condition of mankind, and to bring back as many as possible into harmony with the divine arrangements, a special kingdom will be established—the Messianic kingdom—which will come in between the divine government and mankind, because mankind in its weak condition will be unable to meet the requirements of the divine law. But when this kingdom has restored mankind to perfection, it is the divine purpose for Messiah to relinquish this subordinate kingdom, which will merge into and become a part of the great kingdom of Jehovah. Justice will then operate. There will be no place for mercy, and the heavenly Father is not then represented as being a merciful king to his creatures. The heavenly Father will then have made them perfect, so as to need no mercy, and they will be glad to meet all the requirements of the divine government, and will be blessed in so doing.

THE CHRIST TO BE ASSOCIATE RULER OF THE UNIVERSE

Having terminated this work our Lord will not be without an occupation; but, according to the Scriptures, he will continue to be at the right hand of the Majesty on High—next to the Father. He will relinquish the oversight of the affairs of earth, and will assume again the general position as Associate-administrator of the affairs of the universe in connection with the heavenly Father. We are not to suppose, however, that the heavenly Father and the Lord Jesus will be kept busy hearing and deciding cases and administering justice, for the equilibrium will be such that there will be no necessity for such a course. The whole universe will go on practically without any head; and yet there will be the Head. The Son will be next to the Father in authority; and next to the Son will be the bride. The work that will thenceforth progress is not revealed to us except in a very indefinite manner.

We understand by the power of telescopes that the suns have each a planetary system. If God made this earth a planet to be inhabited, it is only reasonable for us to infer that all the planets of the universe will be inhabited, and that The Christ will behold the heavenly Father and his wonderful universe. The power of the heavenly Father is boundless, so far as we can understand. If after we have considered the hundred millions and more of suns and planetary systems beyond the power of human mind to contemplate—if then we realize that the heavenly Father has made the position of Christ illimitable, and he has exalted the bride of Christ with her Lord, then it is reasonable to assume that the work of Christ and the church will be limitless, and that some blessed work for creatures not yet born is the work of all eternity. We simply wonder in amazement! We wonder at the greatness of his goodness to us, which is to lift us—the faithful few who make their calling and election sure—from our low condition to future glories interminable!

CLEANSING FROM FILTHINESS OF FLESH AND SPIRIT

"Having, therefore, these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God."—2 Cor. 7:1.

In our text the expression, "filthiness of the flesh," seems to be a general one, in contrast with the divine purity in which man was created. All violation of law is sin; and all sin is symbolized by leprosy, a very filthy disease. The Apostle, however, does not mean that he and the other brethren were filthy in having the very gross sins that the world has; for any one worthy of the name of brother in Christ would have turned his back upon all gross sins and would have put away all those before he could have become a brother. But the Apostle is speaking of the "dearly beloved" who have left all these, who have left the "wallowing in the mire," as the Apostle Peter puts it.

To what extent we may cleanse ourselves will depend upon the viewpoint from which we speak. The Apostle's thought seems to be that we continue cleansing ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, as though he were pointing to a progressive work—to a high standard toward which we progress: "Be ye perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect." (Matt. 5:48) In one sense, this is impossible. With imperfect bodies, we cannot always do perfectly, even with the best of intentions and motives. But God's provision is that the blood of Jesus Christ keeps cleansing us from all sin, so that his people should maintain this very condition in the Lord's sight—a condition of perfection at all times. That is to say, if they find they have come short, they should go to him for a covering of their blemishes.

But even if the Lord's people do not recognize where they have done wrong, they should know that all have sinned and come short; therefore, they should entreat the forgiveness of their trespasses. They should come to the frame of mind where they will be willing to cover the weaknesses of others, as they desire to be forgiven by God. We cannot suppose that God would be in love with any one who is practising sin. But he has made that arrangement by which we may be cleansed from sin. Thus the Lord's people are exhorted to be "without spot or wrinkle or any such thing." Their robe is to be wholly without filthiness of the flesh. If a spot should appear, small or great, it would be the duty and privilege of the one whose garment is soiled to have it cleansed without delay and not to remain in filthiness. This matter of keeping our garment unspotted from the world is one that should have our continual attention if we would have the Lord esteem us without spot or wrinkle.

WHAT CONSTITUTES FILTHINESS OF THE FLESH AND SPIRIT?

"Cleanse yourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit." It is the new creature that is addressed. It is the new creature that is to do the cleansing—the new will. The flesh is what remains of the old creature which has been reckoned dead

as respects domination of mind or will. But the old body has been turned over to the new will to be its servant of righteousness, to be its tabernacle, until it receives its glorious body in the resurrection. The new will has the stewardship or responsibility over the old body. Not only are we not to permit it to practise sin, but we are to control it in the service of righteousness.

The Apostle here says that we are to cleanse ourselves from the filthiness of the flesh; and we are to judge of what might be filthy habits—or of habits we have that we might afterwards think filthy, impure, undesirable. As rapidly as we come to recognize these, we, as new creatures, will seek to expunge them, eradicate them, remove them. Sometimes filthiness of the flesh is manifested by uncleanness of the hands, uncleanness of the teeth, etc. From the time the holy Spirit begins to operate, the Lord's people want their bodies washed literally; they want their hands clean; they want their teeth clean. Again, filthiness of the flesh might be in the nature of rubbing snuff on the nose, for instance. This would not be quite so bad as the chewing of tobacco, not quite so filthy as the smoking of tobacco. The same person at different times in his experience might have different conceptions of this matter, but as we come to see we should correct these habits.

But above all. the Lord's people desire purity in their inward parts; and the Apostle says that we should cleanse ourselves from filthiness of the spirit. This does not imply that the new creature is filthy, but that the mind is filthy. How could the mind of the new creature be "filthy" or unclean? We answer that the new creature must use the old brain; and it is for the new creature to exercise control, not only in the things which we chew and take into our bodies, but also in the operation of the brain, so that we shall think purely; for the brain, as well as the hands and feet, is the implement, the servant, of the new creature, who is responsible for these things. He is to show his loyalty to the Lord by the way he deals with these things entrusted to his care.

Considering the latter part of the text, we are to understand that God will look even deeper than our words and actions—even to the thoughts and intentions of our minds, to see to what extent we would harbor an impure thought. If we find that there has been harbored in our mind a thought disloyal to the Lord and to the brethren, or a malicious thought, whether spoken or not, it is a sin, a blemish, a filthiness of the mind; for it is something out of harmony with us as new creatures—out of harmony with our God.

The Apostle puts cleansing the flesh first; not that we are to have the flesh clean before the mind, but we are more liable to see the defilements of the flesh than those of the mind. As we get into the practise of looking for the imperfections of the flesh, we are not to forget to look after the imperfections of the mind, as the Apostle exhorts. He proceeds to say that we are learning more and more, under the instructions of our Lord and Head, the Father's representative. We are in the school of Christ, learning what the standards of truth and righteousness are. Now, if we would not do the things which would offend our earthly friends, then we should be very zealous lest we come short of doing the things which would be pleasing in the Father's sight.

THE MISRULE OF THE MIND OF THE FLESH

There is a difference to be observed between the spirit, which stands for mind, and the will, which is the new creature. As an old creature we had both a mind and a body; and the mind in a more or less riotous manner had more or less irregularly governed the body. Sometimes one organ was in control; sometimes another; at one time the organ of alimentiveness, at another time, another faculty. But these qualities of the mind are more or less unbalanced by our conditions in life and our environment.

The world in general seems to be running along this line. Today they find pleasure in one thing; tomorrow in another. Sometimes it is ambition. One may say, "I will be a great general," and that thought becomes the mastering element of his mind. With another, the chief thought is some scheme of motherhood; with another it may be pride of dress and show; with another it may be the love of money, which becomes the controlling element of mind; with still others it may be politics which takes possession of the life. In either case, it rules the life. Anything which would interfere with these aspirations would be pushed aside; and anything that would help them would be encouraged.

But with the Christian the matter is different. His aspirations and ambitions are that he may be in harmony with God and have the blessings of eternal life, which it is God's will to give to any who are of the right attitude of mind. With the world, the first thought is, "I have been working for some time to be a politician, and I will continue"; or "I have been striving for a certain position in society, and I will still strive for it"; or what not. Frequently the thought of becoming children of God and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ our Lord, is set aside as being too hard to strive for. Their thought is that they do not know whether or not they would ever get the things which "eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man" (1 Cor. 2:9)—the things which God has prepared for those that love him——for at first these things are not great inducements. This appreciation of righteousness is what the Scriptures intimate to be God's drawing influence.

But if the right influences prevail, there will be a radical change of the life, the reward of which, if faithful, is to be a high and glorious future. Our Lord said that we should first count the cost. Those who take heed to his counsel, in proportion as they may realize what that cost is, find it to be the putting aside of all earthly ambition or honor. These must all be laid aside or counted as loss or dross in contrast with God's glorious promises. In making up one's mind the decision is reached after a discussion of all the qualities of the mind. If there is not such a discussion, there is likely to be trouble afterward. Some element will say that it had not been consulted. Hence, one should do as the Lord said, "Count the cost!"

LET THE WILL OF GOD RULE YOUR HEART

To those who count the cost and make a full submission to God, it means not only a turning from sin, but more than that. It means the full surrender of all one has, every talent possessed, to the Lord Jesus. That function of the brain by which the various qualities of the mind are consulted and a decision reached, depends upon the force and weight the higher qualities of the mind have. . By "higher qualities" we mean justice, appreciation of divine mercy, reverence for God, for righteousness and for all things which are holy, etc. The individual who has not such a constitution of brain is not on trial for life at the present time. Only such as possess these qualities belong to the household of faith. Only such are begotten of the holy Spirit.

This action of the mind, of the spirit, when it determines or wills to accept the Lord's will, is best represented by a legislative chamber, as, for instance, the Congress of the United States or the Parliament of Great Britain. These bodies are composed of different members. The person who receives the largest number of votes has the largest influence, and may be said to have control of that body, for he is the representative of the majority. So in our minds; having decided to surrender to God, these higher qualities have accepted the Lord Jesus as the great Head of the church. Thenceforth the person is subject to the will of God.

It is not that we put any quality of our mind to be ruler, but that we put the will of the Lord there and accept him to be ruler in our wills, in our minds. Now, having reached this position in which Christ is the great Head, we should seek not only to cleanse the expressions of our tongues, and our actions, but to cleanse our minds also and bring them into subjection. It is our reasonable service that we cleanse not only our bodies and our words, but the very inmost thoughts of our minds. Anything that could be injurious either to ourselves or to another—envy, strife, hatred, bitterness—is to be put down and submitted to the new regulations, the new will which has taken control.

The very object of the begetting of the new creature, the very object of giving it the opportunity of the present life, is to develop character and to crystallize that character. This seems to be the thought of the Apostle when he says, "Whom he [God] did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his son"—not partly conformed, but fully conformed to the image of his Son. Our mental state, our will, must be fully fashioned after the mind of Jesus Christ. And his will was full obedience to the Father's will, to the extent of self-sacrifice, even unto death.

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"PERILOUS TIMES SHALL COME"

"This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come."—2 Tim. 3:1.

We are to distinguish clearly between the restraint of the fallen angels "in chains of darkness," and the binding of Satan, who is the prince of demons. The binding of Satan, as the Scriptures set forth, is at the second coming of Christ: "And he laid hold of the dragon, that old serpent, which is the devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years." (Rev. 20:2) And during that thousand years Christ and his saints shall reign as kings and priests unto God. The restraint of the inferior angels is mentioned by St. Peter and St. Jude. Speaking of these fallen angels, St. Peter says, "Which sometime were disobedient, when once the long-suffering of God waited in the days of Noah."—2 Pet. 2:4; Jude 6; 1 Pet. 3:20.

As we examine the Scriptures we see that there were angels of light who became disobedient, who left their primary estate as angels, and sought to become men, who assumed the human form. We find the record of them in Gen. 6:1-4: "The sons of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair; and they took them wives of all which they chose." There were children born to them. "And there were giants in the earth in those days, . . . mighty men which were of old, men of renown." Then the whole world was filled with wickedness more than during the sixteen hundred preceding years. And God swept away all mankind except those saved in the ark.

SPIRITS SEEK TO MAKE VOID THE WORD OF GOD

The Apostle proceeds to show what was done with the angels who fell. They have less power, less privilege, than formerly. Then, they had the power of materialization, and could not only eat and drink, but perform all the functions of men. After the flood they were restrained in chains of darkness; that is to say, they were restrained from materialization and from working their power in light, as they had previously done. However, they were still working, as when Saul sought the witch of Endor to inquire as to how the battle would go.—1 Sam. 28:7-20.

The Prophet Isaiah says we should not have anything to do with those "who peep and mutter" and who pretend to have communication with the dead. (Isa. 8:19) But these fallen angels seek to make void the Word of God; hence the various personations of the dead, as in the case of Samuel to Saul. It is not to be supposed that Samuel would come and give the information which God had said that Saul should not have. The same principle applies down to our day. The fallen angels have not been able to do their work except as they have gotten possession of human bodies by getting possession of their wills.

So we read in the New Testament that there are many possessed—not of devils, but of demons. Of these demons various accounts are given. When our Lord addressed the man who dwelt among the tombs, the Lord inquired, "What is thy name?" and the answer was, "Legion; for we are many." Not only one evil spirit had gotten into the man, but a host of them. When Jesus commanded them to come out of the man, they asked that they might go into the herd of swine. Jesus permitted them to go; and the swine ran down into the sea and were choked. It is recognized as a fact that swine are not easily stampeded. You could whip one of the swine, but if you want them to move, you must whip every one of them. Yet there were enough demons to enter the whole herd of swine.

The fallen spirits seem to be thoroughly degraded in their appetites and desires. And while they prefer to obsess human beings, yet, rather than have no animal body at all, they prefer, as shown in the foregoing, to have the bodies of swine. No doubt our Lord knew what the result would be. It was intended to give illustration as to what are valuable things for us to know: First, as to the number of evil spirits indicated by the number in the herd of swine; and, secondly, to demonstrate that they have no power to enter even into dumb animals, to show that poor, dumb creatures are free from them, and to demonstrate that they cannot trouble us, except as we permit them, or tamper with, or allow our minds to come under their hypnotic or obsessing influence.

MODERN UNBELIEF IN EVIL SPIRITS

And there are similar illustrations. On one occasion the evil spirits spoke out, and when the Apostle Paul could stand it no longer, he rebuked them. In the case mentioned above, the man was clothed and in his right mind, sane enough, when rid of the evil influence. (Mark 5:2-5, 15, 19, 20) So it has been ever since. There are physicians who tell us that more than one-half of all those in insane asylums are there because of obsession by evil spirits. But there are many physicians who do not believe in evil spirits or in obsession.

When the Apostles were sent out by our Lord, they returned to Jesus, saying, "Even the evil spirits are subject unto us through thy name." (Luke 10:17) Those who deny the Scriptures say that these people were deceived, and that our Lord was unscientific. Our holding is the reverse of this—that the Lord and the Apostles were scientific, and that the people of our day are deceived in supposing that there are no evil spirits. We see these operating today, sometimes foretelling the future, clairaudiently, so that mediums are able to hear and to know things that others about them are not able to hear and know. God's people should be on guard, lest they come under evil influences. We have known some people who have come under this power.

There was a brother in Florida who held conversation with the evil spirits and explained to them the Bible; and he thought he was about to convert some. They gave very respectful attention for awhile and asked questions which he answered. But after awhile they seemed to have their curiosity satisfied, and talked in all sorts of vulgar language. The brother said he could not get rid of them. He wrote to us asking how to do so. We told him to exercise his will, and meantime to offer prayer to the Lord, as the only one who could rid him of the evil spirits. They finally left him. Their hold was broken. A lady who was a writing medium supposed that it was some dead friend writing through her. She came to believe that there were evil spirits taking hold of her hand to do this writing, and refused to have anything more to do with the matter.

FALLEN SPIRITS REGAINING THEIR LIBERTY

The question may be asked as to how it will be in the closing time of this age. The Apostle tells us that these evil spirits are to be restrained until the judgment of the great day. What would seem to be implied? We answer that this is the day of Christ, the thousand-year day. As he has been dealing with the church, so in the thousand years he will deal with the world. Messiah's kingdom is the kingdom for which we pray, "Thy kingdom come!" The Apostle says that the fallen angels are restrained in chains of darkness until the great day. And so we find at this very time, this very day, not only evidences of the inauguration of the new dispensation—the blossoming of the wilderness, the electric light, and all the blessings belonging to this new dispensation—but also the evidences that these fallen spirits are obtaining more liberty. We have reason to believe, on what we think reliable information, that there have been materializations.

Spiritualists claim that, more and more, spirits will exercise this power of materialization. They say that it will be only a little while until the dead will be walking around amongst the living. And materialization is only one of the powers which they can use. It is the fallen angels who are representing themselves as dead humans, in order to deceive and operate contrary to the divine arrangement and plan; and these are still working as adversaries of God and opponents of righteousness. We should not be much surprised if there are some very startling things—very wonderful things—to happen in the near future. If we get any conception of the time before the flood, we realize that the earth was full of violence. God perceived that the thoughts of men's minds were evil and only evil. And so today.

The Apostle tells us that in the dawning of this new dispensation and the closing of this Gospel age, men shall be truce-breakers—violent. He proceeds with an entire list. (2 Tim. 3:1-5) This description is prophetic, we believe, of the time in which we are living. And this condition, we think, will be due largely to the evil spirits, just as in the days of Noah. Our Lord, giving an illustration of how things will be at his second coming says, that it will be as in the days of Noah—people will be eating and drinking, planting, etc. He mentions that people will be ignorant of the time of his coming; that as the flood came suddenly, so would come the time of the ushering in of the new dispensation. Our thought is that probably there will be a good deal of similarity—not that the evil spirits will be able to break the bands, or chains, which have been put upon them, but that it will be part of God's plan to let this happen. God has been restraining these evil spirits during the four thousand years since the flood.

KNOWLEDGE OF THE TRUTH A SAFEGUARD

Speaking of ourself: if we were living today under the ordinary knowledge of mankind in general, and no more, we feel sure that we should not be able to maintain our position as a Christian. Our faith might waver; we might not be able to believe in the existence of God. But we think the hour is coming when there will be a test of this kind. Mankind will have reason to doubt whether there is any other God than nature, which is a very cruel god. Many are coming to believe even now that the Lord is merely a god of nature, and by processes of evolution has been creating the race in the earth. These will certainly come to a place where there will be a severe trial of faith.

Already many are falling; many are standing aloof from God and the Bible. Incidentally, the Lord describes that time when he says he will proceed to "do his work, his strange work"

—the procedure which will seem most strange to mankind, causing great trials and difficulties to come upon the earth and upon the nominal church systems and all who have identified themselves with nominal church Christianity. Many will be thus caused to lose all faith. We know to expect these things and we have, therefore, blessing and keeping-power now. And perhaps we shall need this special help more in the next few years. Who can say?

We can readily suppose that our adversary will have increased power as this time of trouble comes on. We can suppose that the evil work which will be done will be done by Satan and his fallen angels, who will exercise a very baneful influence upon humanity. Some cases have been brought to our attention recently. One was a statement about a person who had had a picture manifestation. When the picture was developed, it showed a man who had been dead for some time. It is evident, then, that the evil spirits are able to exercise some influence which can produce a picture upon a camera. Another case drawn to our attention was that of a person who has "seen things." This person thoroughly believes that he has seen the things with his own eyes. How could this be so? We may not know all the powers which the evil spirits may be able to use, as, for instance, with those who are clairvoyant and are able to see at a distance. We have all heard of mesmerism—that a person under this spirit control would be able to tell accurately things taking place at a distance. This power was tested by having a person do certain things at a certain time; and the person under the influence of the evil spirits was able to fully describe the things that were taking place. We are not sure how these things were done. The person must have seen the thing pictured in the brain in some manner beyond our comprehension. We assume that it must have been the fallen angels who could give this picture upon the brain of the medium, who could give the medium the things she would see. In our dreams we see people walk and hear them talk. And if we could have such things given naturally, we can easily suppose the power the evil spirits could have in this matter. This does not, however, make us understand the philosophy of it.

To what extent these things will be used in the future, we know not. We have no doubt that the things which will be permitted will be very startling. Even to those who have the right understanding of the divine plan of the ages, the things which will be permitted will be very strange. We are prepared for almost anything that might be told. We are convinced of the power of these evil spirits who pretend to do these various things. In fact, we can see that while materialization would be possible to them, a representation upon the mind would be much easier; it would be easier to paint a picture upon the brain.

The Lord's people should have on at all times the whole armor of God that they may be able to stand in this particularly evil day.

RIGHTEOUS REPROOF AND FORGIVENESS OF WRONG

"Let the righteous smite me; it shall be a kindness: and let him reprove me; it shall be an excellent oil, which shall not break my head."—Psa. 141:5.

In the Scriptures the word righteous is used in a two-fold sense. In one sense, absolute righteousness is referred to, as when we read, "There is none righteous, no, not one." In the text under consideration the intimation is given out that our Lord Jesus is the Righteous One who smites. In this sense, of course, the chastisements would come from our Lord; and the one chastised would receive them with appreciation, knowing that the wisdom, justice and love of God are connected with such reproof. But there is a secondary use of the word righteous, applying to mankind. Various persons are spoken of in the Scriptures as being righteous, not because they were perfect, but because they were right-intentioned, right-willed, and manifested in their conduct the Spirit of God, the spirit of righteousness.

In this use of the word righteous, the text seems to imply that all who are the Lord's people should be able to give reproof and correction in righteousness in a manner that would be helpful to those corrected, and for their good; in a way that would bring a measure of comfort and blessing and refreshment; in a manner that would be like excellent or fragrant oil, whose perfume would linger for hours. With this thought before our minds, there is a valuable lesson here. First of all, we should be of those who receive the corrections as of the Lord; and who are glad to be set right if we are wrong in any manner; secondly, we should be of those who recognize that if reproof be proper to give, it should be of a kind that would not be injurious, but such as would be spiritual, uplifting and refreshing.

In order to accomplish this end a reproof should be sympathetic. We should remember that all of the Lord's people are fallen according to the flesh, but are new creatures in Christ; and, if they be new creatures in Christ, they must have the mind of the Lord and desire to glorify him. Any of the brethren giving a reproof from this point of view would recognize that the person reproved had not bad intentions, and would explain as gently and kindly as possible what are the real facts. A reproof of this kind should not be given suddenly; and the person reproving should judge of the punishment to be given and of the proper time, etc., as of the Lord. Thus should any one that is righteous do in administering reproof to another. It should be done only after careful consideration and prayer, and after having arrived at the conclusion that this is the best possible way to help the brother or the sister. If all reproof were given under such conditions we may readily suppose that it would be much more helpful than is the usual reproof.

CRUSHING REPROOF IS UNRIGHTEOUS

The expression, it "shall not break my head," would mean that a reproof should not be disastrous, not be crushing, but it should be an anointing or blessing. To crush the head would be to kill the person. The righteous are not in the world for the purpose of doing injury to others or of harming them, but for doing good in the world. Those who injure others are to that extent unrighteous. Those who use their criticism and reproof, etc., so as to exercise a crushing effect upon the reproved are not righteous. Such should learn how to properly administer criticism. They should learn that the Apostle's statement, "reprove," "rebuke," etc., was not made to all of God's people, but to Timothy, who was an elder. And only those should be chosen as elders who are men of moderation, men of development, men who have learned to control their own lives and their own tongues, so that they would not crush, but that their rebuke would be helpful and intended to draw the person nearer to the Lord, and to be encouraging and helpful generally.

"REBUKE NOT AN ELDER"

When St. Paul instructed Timothy not to rebuke an elder, but to entreat him as a father, the Apostle did not refer to an elder of the congregation, but a person older than one's self. Do not rebuke a person older than yourself. Treat him as a father; likewise the elder women as mothers; and the younger men as brothers, and the younger women as sisters. In other words, an elder is not appointed in the church to brow-beat or to trample down the liberties of others. The spirit of kindness, gentleness, etc., is the holy Spirit. If an elder rebukes in another spirit than this, he should remember that the person rebuked is not a child and should not be treated as a child—not reprimanded or denounced or told "This is all wrong!" Such an unwise course in administering a rebuke is a fruitful cause of difficulty.

It would not be wise or kind or gentle for a younger person to lose patience with older people whom he feels should know about a matter and to say, "You ought to know all about this. I will give you a lesson." This kind of spirit has made difficulty in various places. Apparently the Apostle's remark is to the opposite of this course of conduct, and exhorts to kindness, gentleness, consideration of age and everything that might enter into the matter. It is very evident from different Scriptures that there was a family sympathy in olden times that we do not see exemplified today, as shown in the Apostle's statement: "Rebuke not an elder, but entreat him as a father; and the younger men as brethren; the elder women as mothers; the younger as sisters."—1 Tim. 5:1, 2.

Today it is the custom to be very polite toward strangers and very impolite toward those of one's own family; and some will be very polite amongst those who are outside and very impolite to those to whom they ought to give kindness and help and sympathy. The same thought seems to be given in connection with the admonition to "love as brethren." But today, if you want to find true, real friends, you do not often look for them in the same family. In this respect our progress has surely not been of the evolutionary kind. Father, mother, brothers and sisters should be treated with consideration, with kindness, with love. And this principle should be applied to the household of faith.

"LOVE WORKETH NO ILL TO HIS NEIGHBOR"

In 2 Tim. 4:2 the Apostle, as a minister of the grace of God, explains that the declaration of the Gospel may include three features: (1) reproof; (2) rebuke; (3) exhortation. But it is safe to caution all of the Lord's people against too liberal use of the first two features. In order to reprove properly, the

heart should be very full of love and sympathy; else the reproofs and rebukes might be sharp and possibly do more harm than good. Even with the heart full of love it requires a head that is exceedingly well balanced to be able to make use of reproofs and rebukes to good advantage to those who really need them. And herein God's people are to be "wise as serpents, harmless as doves." Exhortation is the form of service which quite evidently can best be used by the majority of the Lord's people. And even this as well as the other efforts, should be characterized by patience, long-suffering, brotherly-kindness.

WHEN FORGIVENESS IS PROPER

"Take heed to yourselves: If thy brother trespass against thee, rebuke him; and if he repent, forgive him. And if he trespass against thee seven times in a day, and seven times in a day turn again to thee, saying, I repent, thou shalt forgive him."—Luke 17:3, 4.

God does not forgive our sins until we acknowledge them and ask his forgiveness. Our Lord expressly states the propriety of expecting those who trespass against us to make some acknowledgment of their fault before we express our full forgiveness. If he "turn again to thee, saying, I repent, thou shalt forgive him."

We are not to accept one portion of the divine direction and to ignore another portion. We are not to say that our Lord meant it when he said, "Forgive him," and that did not mean it when he said, "Rebuke him; and if he repent, forgive him." With the majority of people, however, it would be quite unnessessary to urge the propriety of repentance—unless they were the transgressors whose duty it is to repent. Most people are sufficiently disinclined to forgive to wait until their forgiveness is asked.

WE SHOULD LIVE ABOVE TRIFLES

On the other side of the question, however, a caution is necessary. The Christian is to have the loving, generous disposition of heart, a copy of the Heavenly Father's disposition. In trivial affairs he is to have so much sympathy and love that he will take no notice of the little wrongs, just as God for Christ's sake deals with us, unless it represents knowledge and wilfulness. Such a rule operating amongst Christians—a determination not to recognize as offense anything that is not purposely done or intended as an offense—would be a great blessing to all, and the proper, God-like course. The transgressions to which our Lord refers are not trivial affairs, things of no consequence, are not evil surmisings or imaginings, are not fancied insults, but positive wrongs done us, which are susceptible of proofs and on account of which it is our duty, kindly and lovingly and wisely, to give some proper rebuke—some intimation that we recognize the wrong and that it has grieved us and hurt us. Then comes the divine rule respecting the one and only proper manner of rebuke given by our Lord (Matt. 18:15-17) and more than once elaborated in this journal and in our other publications. Our Lord intimates that disobedience of his commands evidences a lack in discipleship. Though he gave very few specific commandments, this command which he carefully marked out as the one, only way of adjusting a grievance, is utterly ignored by many advanced Christians.

"EVEN AS CHRIST FORGAVE YOU"

The disposition to forgive should be with us always, and should be manifested by us at all times. Our loving generosity and kindness and desire to think no evil—or as little as possible—should be shown in all the words and acts of life. This course is God-like. God has a kind, benevolent, generous sentiment towards us, even while we were yet sinners, nor did he wait for the sinners to ask forgiveness, but promptly manifested his desire for harmony and his readiness to forgive. The whole Gospel message is to this effect: "Be ye reconciled to God." Our hearts should be so full of this disposition toward forgiveness that our faces would not have a hard look, nor our words of reproof a bitter sting. On the contrary ,they should manifest the loving forgiveness that we should have in our hearts at all times.

Our Lord particularly called attention to the difference between an outward and formal expression of forgiveness with smooth words, and the true forgiveness which is from the heart. The former, or outward forgiveness is only lip-deep, and means that a rankling of an evil, unforgiving spirit is within, and that it will be only a matter of time until the pent-up force of malice and hatred will break forth in words of slander. God reads the heart, and, whatever the lip-profession may be, He will not consider these unless the heart and the life correspond with them. It is vain, therefore, that anyone should say, "I love my brother," and at the same time seek, either by word or act, to do him injury. All the evil-speaking, malice, hatred, envy, strife proceed from evil in the heart; hence the necessity, on the part of all who desire to be of the Lord's body, that they "purge out the old leaven of malice" that they may be members indeed of the unleavened loaf—the body of Christ.

Forgiveness "in your hearts" is the condition which is always to obtain there. We should never harbor any other feeling than that of forgiveness and good will toward all, no matter how seriously they may have trespassed against us. If this be the case, we shall be longing and anxious to exercise the forgiveness outwardly and to express it to the repentant ones. Hence we shall not seek to compel the most elaborate statement on the part of the penitent; but, like the father of the prodigal, to see the repentant one coming in an attitude of humility will touch our hearts and prompt us to go out part way to meet him, to forgive him, to greet him kindly and to put on the robe of fullest fellowship and brotherhood.

"If ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses."—Matt. 6:15.

HATE THE SIN, BUT NOT THE SINNER

Our earliest definition of "Injure not" would probably have been that we should not kill or wound our enemies physically; but as we look at the Teacher and heed his words we hear him say, "Learn of me," and we note with the Apostle that though he did not sin, neither was guile found in his mouth, yet, "When he was reviled he reviled not again [in return]; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed his cause to him that judgeth righteously."—1 Pet. 2:22, 23.

If we are faithful pupils it will not be long until we see that the perfect law of liberty, the law of Christ, is a discerner of the very thoughts and intents of the heart; and that while we must hate all sin, we cannot hate any sinner and yet have the love of God perfected in our hearts. We see that this means, not only that we must not even wish to do so. The evil wish must be conquered and the selfish conditions which gave it birth must be utterly destroyed and replaced with love—the Spirit of Christ.

"COPIES OF GOD'S DEAR SON"

We may learn a lesson from the fact that those two grand characters, John the Baptist and our Lord, each fulfilled his own mission, according to the divine arrangement; but that they had different missions. John's mission was pre-eminently that of a reprover and reformer, and we are to understand that as a prophet he was supernaturally guided in respect to the various features of the course he took. Our Lord's mission, on the contrary, was a different one; he was gathering to himself those whom John's ministry served to arouse to righteousness and to zeal to know and to do the Lord's will.

We who are called to be the body of Christ and to follow him may learn a lesson in this as respects our proper course. We are not sent forth as John was, to dwell in the wilderness, living and dressing uncouthly, and to criticise and denounce everything and everybody. Some of the Lord's dear people fail to notice that such commissions are special and very rare; and sometimes in following the wrong copy, they undesignedly bring reproach upon the Lord's cause.

We are to be copies of God's dear Son, our Lord, and not to be copies of John the Bpatist. We are not to stir up strife by trying to mind other people's business, not to seek to govern all the affairs of this world, reproving emperors, kings, governors, etc.; but, on the contrary, we are exhorted by the Apostle to remember that what God sees fit to permit, we can see fit to endure. Even though we find many things which we cannot endorse, we may equally find ourselves able to avoid any special denunciation of them—especially of things which have no bearing whatever upon the proper understanding and fulfilling of the Lord's Word. The Apostle points out the proper position, saying, "As much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men." And our Lord emphasized the same thought, saying, "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the children of God."—Rom. 12:18; Matt. 5:9.

AN UNWISE COURSE

Some of the holiest of the Lord's people err on this subject in their own families, and needlessly arouse prejudice and opposition, and make their homes unhappy, by continually finding fault with things which, though not up to the standard of saintliness and cross-bearing, are, nevertheless, not immoral or wicked, even in tendency. Parents and guardians are surely to guard against all tendencies toward immorality, etc., but to find fault with those they love, merely because they are only nominal Christians and have the spirit of worldliness, is certainly unwise. The general life of peace and joy in the holy Spirit is the very best reproof of worldliness they can give, and the very best recommendation of the glorious Gospel they profess. This is the epistle that will be read, the light that will reprove darkness.

In other words, we must not expect from, nor try to force upon the unconsecrated the details of our own self-denials. We

must wait until they shall see full consecration to be their "reasonable service" and present their bodies living sacrifices to God. Pastors and teachers, however, should seek to keep continually before the Lord's consecrated "flock" the high Scripture standard, realizing that many influences are continually at work to lower the standard of holiness and devotion.

"WHAT MANNER OF PERSONS OUGHT WE TO BE?"

How highly we, who belong to the Gospel dispensation, should value its privileges and opportunities, seeking to "make our calling and election sure!" (2 Pet. 1:4-11) If those who were called with an earthly calling to be a "house of servants," rendered but a reasonable service when they engaged in the Lord's work zealously, as did John the Baptist, and were faithful, how much more zeal and energy ought we to put forth—we who have been favored so much more highly? "What manner of persons ought we to be, in all holy conversation and godliness!"—2 Pet. 3:11.

Let us remember that this "high calling," this "heavenly calling," to joint-heirship with our Lord in the kingdom, is a very special and a very limited call, that it will soon end, and that so far as the divine revelation shows, it will never be repeated. In view of these things, let us lay aside every weight, and run with patience the race set before us in the Gospel, looking unto Jesus the author, until he shall have become the finisher, of our faith.—Heb. 12:1.

"No looking back on Sodom's plains
No listening still to Babel's strains;
No tears for Egypt's song and smile,
No thirsting for its flowing Nile.

" 'Tis but a little and we come
To our reward, our crown, our home!
Another year, or more, or less,
And we have crossed the wilderness;
Finished the toil, the rest begun,
The battle fought, the triumph won!"

THE FATHER HIMSELF LOVETH YOU

John 16:27.

Be still, my soul, Jehovah loveth thee!
Fret not, nor murmur at thy weary lot;
Though dark and lone thy journey seems to be,
Be sure that thou art ne'er by him forgot:
He ever loves, then trust him, trust him still;
Let all thy care be this—the doing of his will.

Thy hand in his, like fondest, happiest child
Place thou, nor draw it for a moment thence;
Walk thou with him, a Father reconciled,
Till in his own good time he calls thee hence.
Walk with him now; so shall thy way be bright,
And all thy soul be filled with his most glorious light.

Take courage, faint not, though the foe be strong;
Christ is thy strength! He fighteth on thy side.
Swift be thy race; remember 'tis not long.
The goal is near; the prize he will provide.
And then from earthly toil thou restest ever,
Never again to toil, or fight, or fear—oh, never!

He comes with his reward; 'tis just at hand!
He comes in glory to his promised throne!
My soul, rejoice! ere long thy feet shall stand
Within the city of the blessed One—
Thy perils past, thy heritage secure.
Thy tears all wiped away, thy joy forever sure!

—Horatius Bonar.

HE HEALETH THEIR DISEASES

Mark 1:29-45.—March 10.

"Himself took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses."—Matthew 8:17.

Today's study follows closely the one of a week ago. When Jesus left the Capernaum synagogue. He went to St. Peter's home. There St. Peter's mother-in-law lay sick of a fever. It was the work of but a moment for the Savior to take her by the hand and raise her up to health. The fame of Jesus had spread and by evening there were crowds importuning his healing words and touch. "And he healed many that were sick of divers diseases, and cast out many demons, and suffered not the demons to speak, because they knew him."

But he did not remain to increase and deepen the favorable impression that he had made. The next morning, long before daylight, he left Capernaum and went into a desert place for prayer and communion with God. St. Peter and the others who had accepted the call to discipleship followed, and found Jesus later, and apparently urged his return, saying, "All men are seeking thee." But Jesus replied, "Let us go elsewhere, into other towns, to preach there also." And he went into the synagogues throughout all that section, all of Galilee, preaching and casting out demons.

Nothing is more attractive to the human mind than the miraculous power of healing disease. No one enjoys disease, pain and suffering. People would be glad to be healed of disease, even if they were assured that the cures were performed by the power of Satan himself. It should not surprise us today that many false doctrines, wholly out of harmony with God's Word, commend themselves to the poor, groaning creation by promises of relief from physical ailments, without medicine, and theoretically by the power and favor of God, and supposedly in proof of the doctrines advocated by the healers.

But since these healers hold various and antagonistic doctrines, it is manifest all are not of God, if any of them are. To our understanding, the Bible teaches that no miraculous healing at the present time is authorized by God's Word. St. Paul declared by inspiration that the gifts granted to the early church and exercised by Jesus and the apostles and those to whom they personally communicated them would pass away. We believe that they did pass away—that they gave place to the next and higher manifestation of divine favor, namely, the fruits of the holy Spirit—meekness, gentleness, long-suffering, and love—as evidence of God's favor and of membership in the church of the first-born. The miracles which Jesus and the apostles wrought were merely with a view to the establishment of the early church. Nowhere is it intimated that it was the divine will that all people should be healed of disease during this age.

The general healing of disease will doubtless be a prominent feature of the work of Messiah's glorious kingdom after its establishment. Not only will the ailments of the flesh be lifted, but restitution processes will go on step by step, lifting humanity out of sin, disease and imperfection, up to full and absolute perfection, except in the case of those who wilfully and deliberately oppose the divine arrangement, and who, in due time, will be cut off from life in the second death. All the remainder will ultimately reach the glorious condition of perfection mentioned in the Scriptures, where there will be no more sighing, no more crying, no more dying, because all the former things of sin and death will have passed away; because he that sitteth upon the throne will make all things new.—Rev. 21:4, 5.

SATAN AN ANGEL OF LIGHT

St. Paul intimates that Satan and his messengers, the fallen angels, would seek to transform themselves so as to appear "as angels of light," that they might exercise the greater influence over humanity and that thereby they might inculcate the more successfully false doctrines, subversive of true faith in God and his Word. We believe that the Apostle's words are particularly applicable in our day, and that many conscientious and good people are being deceived, and that miraculous healings are part of the adversary's bait. It would not be appropriate for us to enumerate here the different doctrines which we believe are thus baited. We content ourselves by giving the Scriptural reason for expecting no miraculous healings from God at the present time.

"WHO HEALETH THEIR DISEASES"

It is quite true that under the Law Covenant which God made with Israel, he agreed that sickness should be a penalty for violation of the law, and health a reward for the obedient. The statement of the Prophet, "Who healeth all thy diseases," was applicable physically to the Israelites under the Law Covenant. It has also a spiritual application to the church, the new creation.

But the healing of the new creature and the healing of his flesh are different things. The new creature's soul sickness and heart troubles are all cured by the Good Physician—even though his flesh may suffer pain and go down into death. We are to remember that the condition upon which we were begotten of

the holy Spirit to be new creatures was a full surrender of the flesh and its interests as living sacrifices, holy and acceptable, which is our reasonable service.—Rom. 12:1.

Nor is this any change from the Lord's dealings with the church from the very beginning. So far as the records show all, or nearly all, who were healed by Jesus and the Apostles were "sinners." Surely there is no record of a single instance in which any of the Apostles were healed of any disease. Although St. Paul healed many sick, yet when Epaphroditus was sick and "nigh unto death" we have no mention of any attempt to miraculously recover him.

Similarly, in the case of Timothy, we find that St. Paul neither sent him napkins and handkerchiefs for his healing, nor advised him to pray for his own healing, nor told him that he would pray for him, nor advised him to have others pray for him. On the contrary, he advised certain medicines, "for thy stomach's sake." Indeed, we believe that for God's consecrated people to ask for physical healing would be to attempt to take back again what they have specifically consecrated to the Lord—"even unto death." That the Lord specially overrules in the cases of many of his people to give them remarkable health and strength for their labors in his service, without their asking it, is another matter entirely. This, however, is in no wise in conflict with the fact that God used miracles amongst outsiders, amongst unconsecrated people, as a foreshadowing of the general blessings which will come to mankind under Messiah's kingdom shortly to be established.

Furthermore, let us remember that the miracles performed by Jesus and the Apostles were not attempts to heal all sickness, to banish pain and sorrow. They were merely intended to attract attention to the Gospel message. The time when God shall wipe away all tears from off all faces, and when there shall be no more sighing and crying and dying, will be during and as a result of Messiah's reign of a thousand years.—Rev. 21:4.

Today's study furnishes one proof along this line. Jesus did many mighty works in Capernaum, but merely to attract attention. He went to other cities and towns, leaving behind him in Capernaum many sick and disappointed. Similarly, we read that when Jesus passed the pool of Siloam there was a great multitude of impotent folk there needing healing and waiting the opportunity to go down into the water therefor. Jesus merely observed one of that multitude and said unto him, "Take up thy bed and walk."—John 5:1-9.

A CLEANSED LEPER THANKFUL

Today's study mentions another case of healing. Leprosy was regarded by the Jews as an incurable disease, and as a type of sin. The leper of this lesson had faith in the power of Jesus, and came and kneeled before him and entreated healing, cleansing. His prayer was answered, not because he was one of Jesus' disciples, nor because he promised to become one of them, but because of his exercise of faith, and in order to make of his case a testimony to the priests that Jesus exercised a power divine. The cleansed leper was told to go, according to the law, and present the customary offering, expressing his thanks to God and giving his testimony to the priest respecting his healing, and to have him examine him as the Law required.

Jesus admonished the leper not to make known so great a miracle; but in his thankfulness he could not restrain himself; he told it everywhere. The result was that Jesus could not thereafter visit the large cities because he would be overwhelmed with the number of sick brought to him for healing. He therefore frequented the rural districts, but even then the people sought him for healing, from every quarter.

But alas! they were more appreciative of the restitution blessings than the great privilege which our Lord specially offered them of becoming his footstep followers and joint-heirs in his kingdom, which, by and by, will dispense restitution blessings and healing far and near to every member of Adam's race condemned through the fall of Adam, and redeemed by the precious blood of Calvary.

DATE OF THE MEMORIAL SUPPER

The date for the celebration of the Memorial will be Sunday evening, March 31, 1912, after 6 p. m. According to the Jewish calendar the fourteenth day of the month will begin at the time mentioned, and it was on that day that the lamb was to be slain, and that our "Lamb" was slain. And it was on the night preceding that our Lord instituted the Memorial and symbolical eating of His flesh and the blood as the antitype of Israel's Passover Lamb.

We refer our readers to the Sixth Volume of the Scripture Studies, Chapter XI., entitled "The Passover of the New Creation." There we have endeavored to set forth this subject in detail. We hope that all of God's dear people who trust in the merit of the precious blood of Christ for justification will celebrate this Memorial of the great sacrifice of our Lord. And let us not forget that it also memorializes the consecration to death of all the members of the body of Christ: "If we suffer with him, we shall also reign with him;" "If we be dead with him, we shall also be live with him;" "This cup is the New Testament in my blood." . . . "Drink ye all or it."—Luke 22:20; 1 Cor. 11:25; Mark 10:38.

SIN-FORGIVENESS AND HEALING

MARK 2:1-12.—MARCH 17.

TEXT:—*"Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits: who forgiveth all thine iniquities; who healeth all thy diseases."*—Psalm 103:2, 3.

When later the Savior returned to Capernaum there was a crush to see and hear him, and to bring the sick for his healing words and touch. The miracles which our Lord performed were specially with a view of getting the ear of the people for his message—the Gospel of the kingdom—the good news of the privilege of becoming sons of God and joint-heirs with Jesus in the Messianic government, which would bless Israel and all nations with light, knowledge, and uplift from sin and death conditions.

It was while he was thus preaching that some deeply earnest ones brought to him a palsied man for healing. Unable to come into the house or its court because of the throng, they removed some of the tiling stones of the roof, and lowered the sick man into the presence of the preaching Savior. Such implicit faith, manifested by such heroic effort, could not fail to be appreciated by the Redeemer.

But the unexpected happend. Instead of healing the man of his disease, Jesus exclaimed, "Thy sins are forgiven thee." Under God's arrangement with the Jews, under their special Law Covenant, original sin was typically atoned for by the typical sacrifices, and the people were held to account for their own transgressions of the Law. Hence, amongst the Jews serious sickness implied serious sins. Thus Jesus on another occasion said to one of those whom he healed, "Thy sins, which are many, are forgiven thee. Go and in no more lest a worse thing come upon thee."

We are not to forget that such special dealings were with the Jews only—that they never applied to Gentiles, nor to Christians, although it is quite true that certain ailments, such as syphilis, appear very generally to follow the transgressors of Nature's laws, whether they be Jews or Gentiles. The point we make is that God has no such covenant with the church, nor with the world in general today. Hence, the righteous are often sick, and the sinners healthy.

"WHO CAN FORGIVE SINS?"

When Jesus declared the sins of the palsied Jew forgiven, some of the audience declared that such language was blasphemy—that Jesus was arrogating to himself a power which belonged to God alone. They did not stop to consider that if he were indeed the Messiah, the Redeemer, it would imply that he would possess the authority to cancel the sins from which he was redeeming men. Perceiving their thoughts, and knowing that thus they might stumble over a great truth to their injury, Jesus in a few words clarified the matter, saying to them, Which do you consider the easier, to tell a man that his sins are forgiven, or to heal him? He well knew that they would say that the healing was the more difficult, and, therefore, if Jesus were able to heal the man, there would be no reason why he should say, "Thy sins be forgiven thee," if he had not the power to forgive sins. In proof of this, He said to the palsied man whose sins he had forgiven, "Arise, take up thy bed, and go unto thine house." Immediately the man was healed, and departed carrying his bedding. The people made way for him, and with amazement glorified God, saying, Who ever saw the like!

AUTHORITY TO FORGIVE SINS

There are certain great basic principles relating to God's dealings with humanity which should be recognized. Jehovah's government is based, not upon mercy, but upon justice; as we read, "Justice is the foundation of thy throne." In one sense of the word divine justice never forgives and never can do so,

as we will explain. We read, "All his work is perfect." It is the divine method that every creature of God shall be so perfect as to need no forgiveness, no allowance. Then angels were created perfect, hence there was no need to provide forgiveness for them, because there would be no excuse for their sinning. Likewise man was thus created perfect, in the image and likeness of the Creator, and was without excuse, and therefore needed no provision for mercy so long as he was in relation with his God.

When temptation came, man fell from obedience into sin, and from divine favor and life into disfavor and under the death sentence. He was without excuse and justice made no provision. But another feature of the divine character, love, while not in control, was brought into exercise for man's relief. But divine love or mercy could not override or interfere with divine justice. In other words, God could not forgive a sinner whom He had sentenced to death. What He could do, and did do, was to provide in due time for man's redemption. All of divine mercy, therefore, flows through the channel of redemption.

Applying this principle to our Savior and to his teachings, we ask, How could he forgive sins when divine justice could not forgive sins, nor set aside the penalty of sin? The answer is, Jesus was the representative of divine mercy, and was at that time amongst men for the purpose of giving his life as a sacrifice on man's account, and therefore to him belonged the distinctive honor of forgiving sins. But someone answers that Jesus had not yet died for man's sins, that he had not yet risen for man's justification, that he had not even appeared in the presence of God for the "household of faith."

We answer that while it is true that he had not accomplished this work, and indeed has not yet fully accomplished his work (as the Redeemer and Restorer of men), nevertheless, he had begun the work, he had presented himself as man's Atonement price at Jordan, at the time of his baptism. According to the Scriptures and the type, he at that moment surrendered his earthly all on man's behalf.

However, his surrender of his all did not give him the authority to forgive sins. It was the heavenly Father's acceptance of his consecration—divine acceptance of Jesus' sacrifice that counted. God's acceptance of Jesus' sacrifice was manifested in his impartation of the holy Spirit, which lighted upon Jesus like a dove, as was testified by John the Baptist, and also testified by divine power which thereafter operated in and through Jesus for the healing of diseases. We see, then, that our Lord's words to the palsied man, "Thy sins be forgiven thee," were justified by the fact that he was in the position of making satisfaction for the sins of the whole world, and that the Father had already indicated the acceptance of the sacrifice which was then in process.

"BLESS THE LORD, O MY SOUL"

The text for this study comes from the Psalms, and is most interesting. The Prophet David may have appropriated the words to himself as a Jew, and may have thought of his own physical healing and blessing as evidences of the Lord's favor under the Law Covenant. But the prophetic application of this Psalm to spiritual Israel is still more interesting. The spiritual Israelites are new creatures, and have this treasure in earthen vessels.

With these it is the new mind that recognizes his healing, his forgiveness, his reconciliation to God; and, according to God's promise, all things are working together for good to him, because he loves God and has been called according to the divine purpose. Continually the new creature has cause to exclaim, "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits, who forgiveth all thine iniquities, who healeth all thy diseases!" St. Paul, carrying out this same thought, declared that the great Redeemer will ultimately present his church before the Father faultless and perfect in love—"sown in weakness, raised in power; sown in dishonor, raised in glory; sown an animal body, raised a spirit body." We shall be like him and see him as he is and share his glory.

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THE GOSPEL ST. PAUL PREACHED

"For I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ; for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek."—Rom. 1:16.

There are many religions, and it is a mistake that we have perhaps said in the past that there is no religion but one. A religion would properly be considered "Any system of worship by which any people recognize the Almighty and seek to do him honor." We are, therefore, to recognize the various great religions that are in the world in the sense that we could not properly ignore them. We have, for instance, the Confucian teaching, the Brahmin teaching, the Buddhist teaching, the Mohammedan teaching, the Jewish teaching and the Christian teaching. These all present themselves to us as religious teachings. They all believe themselves more or less rational; they all believe themselves more or less reasonable. Every man tries to think that his own theory on any matter is a reasonable theory; and he is proper in so doing.

In harmony with our text, we propose to compare the religion of Jesus with all other religions. In the beginning, we state with the Apostle, "I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ." Whatever may be said of other gospels, we believe, as Christians, that in the Christian religion we have that of which no man need be ashamed. There may perhaps be certain features and forms of certain creeds of which we might be ashamed—that do not come up to our highest ideals. But the Christian religion, as presented in the Word of God, should be the standard of Christendom; and of that we are not ashamed. It will compare with all other religions in the world, and come off victorious, in every sense of the word. All of these various religions seem to recognize that man is in an imperfect, unsatisfactory, sinful condition; therefore, each of these religions seeks to present certain tenets, or teachings, that will help man up out of his imperfect condition, back into harmony with his God.

A COMPARISON OF RELIGIONS

If we consider the teachings of the Mohammedans, we find that they have certain qualities which are very advantageous, and other qualities which we could not so highly commend. Their endeavor is not to do injury, but to make men better. Their theory is that mankind are fallen and need lifting up out of their fallen condition. The same may be said of the teachings of the Brahmin, the Confucianist and the Buddhist. They are all more or less presentations of what are supposed to be cures for man's fallen condition, cures for his unsatisfactory attitude.

Some of these religions pronounce one kind of penalty for those who will not accept them, and others declare other kinds. Some offer one kind of reward for those who accept and follow their teachings, while others offer other kinds of rewards. But all agree that man needs to be elevated and lifted up out of his fallen condition, which is sinful and unsatisfactory. There seems to be in every man, naturally, without any education on the subject, something which tells him that he is not perfect; that he is not in full accord with his own conscience, not in accord with his own highest ideals of the divine mind.

All religions, therefore, recognize this principle of sin and propose remedies therefor. We see the evidence of this as manifested in their disciples everywhere. Many seek to crucify the flesh in one form or another—some by flagellations, some by restraints upon the various liberties of life, some by holding their hands in the air for days, seeking to become holy and thus appease their god.

But none of these things, in the light of the Gospel of Christ, seem to be the highest and noblest ideals. Doubtless all have done some good and uplifted some men out of the degradation in which they were. Mankind might have been worse off if it had not been for these religions.

But now, if we compare these with the religion of Jesus Christ, we believe everything is to be said in favor of the religion of Christ. In the first place, all these religions more or less resemble the Jewish religion, which is of God, and hence all these religions are more or less in harmony with God's proposition.

God's proposition to the Jews was, "Do these things and ye shall live," have everlasting life. That was the covenant made by God with them at Mount Sinai, at the hands of Moses. They thought at first that they would surely be lifted up out of sin, because God had given them a law, and by keeping it they would be perfect and be brought into harmony with God. In this they were mistaken, for, as they found out, as the centuries passed, none of them were able to keep the law, because it is the measure of a perfect man's ability; and none of them could measure up to the perfect man.

Israel found, therefore, as the Apostle states it, that "by the deeds of the law shall no flesh be justified in God's sight." And they found also that the law, instead of perfecting, justi-

fying them, and giving them eternal life, brought to them a greater realization of sin than they ever had before. And this was the real blessing of the Law Covenant—it showed them their sinful condition and their inability to lift themselves out of it. But the Jews do not recognize that great fact today, for if they did they would be crying to God for mercy instead of hoping to keep the law and thus justify themselves.

The same thing might be said to be true of all the heathen religions. All offer help by which mankind may make themselves perfect, but none are able to make themselves perfect, and they all realize that they are sinners and imperfect to the last degree. There is, therefore, nothing that is logical in any of these religions, because they all start out to claim that a man ought to be perfect, ought to be holy, and are agreed that he is not. As before called attention to this agrees with the words of God with respect to Israel, "By the deeds of the law shall no flesh be justified in his sight." God's Word agrees with all of these—that man is a sinner, that he cannot do the things that he would, that his ideals are to be and are higher than his capacity and ability. And so St. Paul declares, "We cannot do the things which we would."

Christianity answers that the reason is that we are fallen creatures, sold under sin. Who sold us, when and where? The Bible answers that "By one man's disobedience sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men." Death has passed upon the entire race and thus impoverished it mentally, morally and physically, so that now, because of the fall, we cannot do the things which we would like to do.

The Bible tells us that originally Adam was not in our condition, but was perfect and could keep the divine law perfectly, but that "we are sold under sin." And so the Prophet David expresses the same thought, "Behold, I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me." So we behold that we are a race of sinners, imperfect mentally, morally and physically, and therefore unable to keep the divine standard or law. What, then, does Christianity offer us that no other religion offers us? Christianity offers us a Savior, and no other religion offers a Savior.

THE GOD OF THE BIBLE IS THE GOD OF ALL GRACE

Christianity recognizes that the condition came about by the disobedience of one man, Adam, and it sets forth Jesus as the one who redeems man from that death sentence that came upon our first parents: "As by a man came death, by a man comes also the resurrection of the dead"; "For as all in Adam die, even so all in Christ shall be made alive," writes St. Paul—"every man in his own order." Here, then, Christianity has a logical superiority, in that it provides for a satisfaction of divine justice.

All religions say that it is divine justice that is opposed to sin, but Christianity offers a satisfaction for divine justice. "Christ died for our sins"; "He gave Himself a Ransom for all"; "He is the propitiation [satisfaction] for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world," writes the Apostle. So then, Christianity is not only more logical, but is more just—it recognizes divine justice.

We must recognize that if God condemned the world understandingly and truly, as the Great Judge of mankind, there must be some satisfaction of justice ere the Chief Justice of the universe could set aside the penalty and release the culprit. Man has sinned and the great Chief Justice has passed the sentence, and there is no way to revoke that sentence, except by meeting it. And so Christianity sets forth that our Lord Jesus came into the world to meet the penalty, and that he, "by the grace of God, tasted death for every man."—Heb. 2:9.

Christianity has another superiority over all other religions, and it is this: it recognizes a love and compassion upon the part of God that no other religion recognizes. All these religions do recognize a God, and we claim it makes very little difference whether they call him Allah, or Jehovah, or some other name. They recognize, we believe, the same, one God, but they do not recognize his real traits of character. They perceive his justice, and their own transgressions of divine justice, but they do not see the merciful provision that God has made. Their God is represented by the Chinese idol, which pictures to them the character of God.

We remember a Chinese banner we once saw. The figure on this banner represented a very demon-like character, and lightning was represented as flashing from his closed fist. He was a god to be feared, one who would take vengeance upon them.

The God of the Bible, however, while just, is not a vengeful God, not unkind; but, on the contrary, he is the God of All Grace, the Father of Mercies, from whom cometh every good and perfect gift. And the great Gift that he gave is the greatest of all gifts, the Gift of his Son, for man's sin, that thus he might offer a satisfaction to his own justice. Nor was this arbitrarily at the expense of, or contrary to the will of the Redeemer; because the Scriptures make clear that it was by virtue of the "prize" set before our Lord; as we read, "For the joy that was set before him, he endured the cross, despising the shame."—Heb. 12:2.

This love of God is not content with merely the provision of the Savior, and the arrangement that if anybody shall hear and believe he shall be blessed; but this love of God proposes to go still further, namely, that he who thus redeems the race shall become the King of earth; and his scepter, his rule, shall be "from sea to sea, and from the river to the ends of the earth," until "every knee shall bow and every tongue confess" to the glory of God; and "the knowledge of the Lord shall fill the whole earth as the waters cover the great deep." Thus every creature shall come to know that there is a God, and that the way he proposes to be just and merciful is through his Son, who is to be the great deliverer of the race.

In what way will this great Deliverer come? This is a part of the Gospel, a part of the "good tidings." It will be through his great kingdom, which he will set up in his own due time. His kingdom will not be merely for the rich or powerful, but for the poor also: "He shall lift up the poor from the dunghill," is a part of the prophecy. His power and influence will be the great moving principle that will level the whole world of mankind. As the Scriptures declare, all men are on a common level before God, for all have sinned and come short of the glory of God, and all are recipients of divine mercy.

The blessing of the Lord will be that all may come back; and when thus brought back to all that was lost in Adam and redeemed by Christ, they will be able to keep the divine law perfectly, and will therefore to all eternity be in covenant-relationship with God. For those who refuse to enjoy that blessing prepared for them, the Scriptures clearly declare that God has provided the second death—not a place of torment—"The soul that sinneth it shall die"; "The wages of sin is death."

"But," someone may say, "what about the church? You have been speaking about the world and what Jesus will do for it; what about the church?" Those of us who have experienced this salvation know that as a power it has not lifted us physically to perfection, but it has a power that has come into our hearts, into our minds, through faith, transforming, renewing us—our minds, our wills. The Lord's true people were once aliens, strangers and foreigners to the Lord, but by a knowledge of the Savior have become transformed in their lives, so that now they are seeking to walk, not after the flesh, but after the spirit, the spirit or mind of God, the divine will.

Here we see the difference between the Jew under his covenant of law and the Christian under the higher covenant that the Lord has made at the present time. The Apostle said that the Jew could not do the things that he would; but he declares equally strongly that "the righteousness of the law is fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit."—Rom. 8:1.

How is this possible? Are we better than the Jews? Are we of less fallen nature than the Jews, or made perfect? Nay, verily. The Apostle explains that for the class called out during this Gospel age there is a special arrangement in operation, and God deals with these according to their minds, their wills, their intentions, so that under this Covenant of Grace we are counted as fully keeping the divine law—the righteousness, the full meaning of the Law, is fulfilled in us who are walking not after the flesh but after the spirit—not up to the spirit, but after the spirit.

But how could we be fully justified if not able to walk up to the spirit? The answer is that the blood cleanses us and commutes our sins; Christ imputes his perfection and righteousness to us, so that our best endeavors are accepted in Jehovah's sight as perfect, for we are justified, not according to the flesh, but according to the spirit.

Another way in which the Gospel of Christ is superior to all others is that this Gospel is world-wide. No other Gospel of which we have knowledge is world-wide. The Gospel of the Son of God is that "Jesus Christ, by the grace of God, tasted death for every man," rich and poor, Jew and Gentile, every nation and people and kindred and tongue. "There's a wideness in God's mercy like the wideness of the sea." We know of no other religion that is so unbiased, that recognizes no national lines, that has the thought that we are one race, which sprang from one man, condemned through one man, and redeemed through the Man Christ Jesus, and that all are to have a blessing—no other religion under the sun!

The religion of Christ, of which we are not ashamed, is best in this, that it is the most God-like religion, because of its breadth, because of its justice, because of its impartiality, because of its love, its goodness and merciful qualities. It shows forth, as does no other religion, the justice, wisdom, love and power of Jehovah, our God. To him be glory and honor and dominion forever!

THE PRAYERS OF THE NEW CREATION

JOHN 15:7.

[The last 19 paragraphs of this article, as it originally appeared in issue of March 1, 1912, were reprinted from article entitled "Pray Without Ceasing" published in issue of April 15, 1904, which please see.].

Prayer to God, communion with him, is a great privilege and an evidence of his favor. God does not grant us this privilege, however, in order that he might be informed of our desires, for since we are imperfect ourselves our desires cannot be perfect: "We know not what things to ask for as we ought;" and he does for us better than we know how to ask or think. Nor does God permit us to pray to him that we may inform him regarding matters here; for he knoweth the end from the beginning, as well as every intervening step. But he has instituted prayer for our benefit and comfort and instruction.

The object of prayer is to bring the heart and the mind of the child of God into contact with the heart of God, that he may be enabled thus most fully to realize the Fatherhood of God, his love and his deep interest in every item of our welfare; that in deep affliction we may unburden our hearts to God and thus have forcibly brought to our attention his love and care and wisdom—for our encouragement, not his; for our strengthening, not his, and for our joy.

This opportunity is not for us to instruct Jehovah how to arrange matters for the best, but to bring our hearts to realize him as the center of wisdom and power, that having unburdened our hearts, we may be prepared to listen for his answer and advice through his Word. And he whose knowledge of prayer is confined to the meager information he has imparted to God with "much speaking," and who has never learned to listen for the answer to his prayer from the Word of God, has, as yet, measurably failed to appreciate the object of prayer.

Earnestness in God's service will bring his children to him frequently, to realize at his feet his sympathy with them in the difficulties, discouragements and trials of life, as well as to ask his guidance and overruling of every affair of life, and through his Word to hearken to his wisdom, which will enable them to serve him acceptably.

The province of prayer is to ask for only such things as God has already declared himself well pleased to grant. And while we may freely speak to him as a Father, and tell him how we understand his Word, and the confidence and trust we have in its ultimate fulfillment, yet we must not only avoid telling the Lord of our will and our plans, and what we would like, but we must avoid and put far from us any such spirit, and must recognize, and bring ourselves into full accord with his will and his plan for accomplishing it. If this thought were appreciated, it would cut short some of the "long prayers," "much speaking," and "vain repetitions" by which some endeavor to instruct the Lord in their wishes regarding every matter under heaven. It would send them speedily to the Word of God to search diligently the plan of God that they might labor as well as pray in harmony with it.

While assuring us that the Father cares for us, and is well pleased to have us come to him with sincere hearts, the Master informs us of the conditions upon which we may expect an answer. He says, "If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you." —John 15:7.

"ABIDE IN ME"

The conditions of the above statement, or promise, are two; the first is, abiding in Christ. But what is it to abide in Christ? Only those can abide in Christ who are in Christ, who have come into him by faith, repentance and consecration; and to abide in him means that the faith will abide, the repentance for sin and the opposition to it will abide, and the consecration to the Lord and his service will abide, and it will be manifest that our will has been wholly consecrated—swallowed up in the will of Christ.

The other condition is also a weighty one: "If my Word abide in you." Ah! how evident it is that our Lord meant to associate himself and his Word, the Scriptures, in the minds, in the hearts, in the lives of all who are truly his! They must search the Scriptures to know the will of the Lord; to know what he has promised and what he has not promised; to know what they may ask and what they may not ask; and, ascertaining these, one fully consecrated—one controlled entirely by the will of God—will not want to be, to have, or to do anything except that which will be pleasing to the Lord in respect to himself.

When this position has been reached, the will of Christ governing him, the words of Christ abiding in him, we can readily see that whatever would be asked by one thus well informed with respect to the divine promises and fully submissive to the divine will would be things which the Father would be pleased to grant in answer to his requests.

These requests would probably be as simple as was the Master's petition when he prayed, "Not my will, but thine, be done!" (Luke 22:42) In such a condition prayers are always answered; but in such a condition the prayers would be very modest. One's prayers under such circumstances would be more a thanksgiving for blessings, an expression of confidence and trust, and the committal of his way unto the Lord, confidently realizing the promise that to him under such conditions, all things (even seeming disasters and troubles) shall work together for good. Hence, whatever came, such a one could realize his prayer answered. He could rejoice evermore because he is prepared to rejoice in tribulation as well as in prosperity, in the path of service. He has no will to oppose whatever God permits, knowing that it will work out good.

Such, amongst the Lord's people, could not pray that their own will be done; for they have no will except God's. Those who abide in Christ, and in whom his Word abides, can pray for their enemies and those who despitefully use them and persecute them, though they cannot pray God to open the blinded eyes of their enemies at once, nor in their way. Realizing from the indwelling Word of God's promise that the blinded eyes shall all be opened to the truth, they can abide his time. Going to God in prayer they may express their forgiveness of their persecutor, their interest in him, and their patient waiting for the day when "the knowledge of the Lord shall fill the whole earth as the waters cover the sea"—ocean deep—and his will shall be done on earth even as it is done in heaven.

ANSWERS OFTEN DELAYED

The answer to our prayer is not always granted immediately; but after we have made sure that our requests are in accord with the promises, those things which lie very close to our hearts become our continual prayer, associating in our minds with all of life's duties and interests, the heart gravitating continually toward the thing we have desired of the Lord, and on suitable opportunities repeating to him the request. This is the kind of prayer which the Lord commended, saying, "Men ought always to pray and not to faint." (Luke 18:1) The Lord's people ought to continue asking for the right things with some degree of persistency, and should not grow weary, hopeless, faithless, faint in their hearts.

Doubtless there are many reasons why the Lord does not promptly grant all of our requests which are in accordance with his will, in harmony with his Word. We may not know all of these reasons; but some of them are apparent. Undoubtedly one reason for the Lord's delay in answering us is often to test the strength and the depth of our desires for the good things that we request of him.

For instance, he informs us that he is more willing to give his holy Spirit to us who ask than are earthly parents to give good things to their children. Yet the giving of his holy Spirit is a gradual process; and we are enabled to receive it only in proportion as we are emptied of the worldly or selfish spirit. It requires time to become thus emptied of self and prepared for the mind of Christ; in some it requires longer for this than in others; but all need emptying in order to receive the refilling.

He that seeketh findeth, but the more he seeketh the more he findeth; to him that knocketh it shall be opened, but his continual knocking and his increasing interest in the knocking means his increasing desire to enter, so that as the door of privilege, of opportunity, swings slowly open before him, his courage and his strength increase as he seeks to avail himself of the opening. Thus every way the blessing is greater than if the Lord were to answer the petitions hastily.

We are to think of our heavenly Father as rich and benevolent, kind and generous, yet wise as well as loving. We are to suppose that he will have pleasure in giving us the desires of our hearts if those desires are in harmony with his plan, which he has already framed on such lines as to include not only our very highest and best interests, but the highest and best interests of all his creatures. Then, whatever comes, his well-informed children can have all the desires of their hearts, because their hearts are in full accord with the Lord; and they desire nothing of the Lord except the good things of his purpose and promise.

"DESIRE, UTTERED OR UNEXPRESSED"

When thus considered, not as a begging arrangement, nor as an occasion of instructing the Lord as to our wills, but as

a season of union and communion of heart with the Father, in which we may relieve our burdened or perplexed hearts and realize divine sympathy, calling to mind divine promises, reviewing divine care, and expressing our confidence in God's many promises, thus bringing those promises afresh and close to our hearts, as though God now audibly uttered them in our hearing—thus considered, how proper, yea, how necessary is prayer to the true child of God! He cannot live without it. To break off this communion would be like stripping a tree of its leaves; their removal would stunt and hinder its development.

But to suppose that Christian life depends solely upon prayer without earnest study of God's Word, is like supposing that a tree could flourish from its leaves only, without roots and soil. Both are needful. As good soil and roots will produce leaves and fruitage, so, likewise, the promises of God's Word absorbed by us will naturally lead to good works and to communion with God in prayer, without which the fruits of the Spirit would soon wither and disappear.

No wonder, then, that Jesus both by precept and by example said, "Watch and pray" (Matt. 26:41), uniting the conditions necessary to our development. Some pray and neglect to watch; others watch and neglect to pray. Both these errors are serious; and it is not possible for us to decide which is the more serious neglect, since either would work disastrous loss of the great "prize" for which we are running.

Nowhere is prayer defined as a duty, though its necessity is stated. The Father desireth such to worship him as worship him in spirit and in truth (John 4:23); and it would be contrary to this principle to define prayer as a duty, and to stipulate a set time or place or a formal manner. The earnestness of the service and the peculiarity of the circumstance will regulate the frequency and the subject matter of prayer.

No form of prayer is furnished in the Scriptures. Even the Master, when asked by the disciples for instruction on the subject, gave them, not a form to repeat, but merely an idea or example of how to arrange their prayers to God. He did not say, Pray this prayer, but, "After this manner pray ye." Our prayers, then, should be after this manner—not an assortment of extravagant demands, but the simple expression of the earnest heart: first, acknowledging and paying homage to God as our Father, the Almighty and Hallowed One; second, expressing our expectation and trust that his kingdom is coming according to promise, and our eagerness for it, and for the time when his will shall be done on earth as in heaven; third, our reliance upon him for "daily bread," which he has promised us; fourth, our acknowledgment that our ways are not perfect and of our reliance upon his favor (granted through Christ Jesus) for forgiveness; and our willingness to exercise forgiveness toward our debtors, toward those who trespass against us.

THE SCRIPTURAL RULE FOR ADJUSTING MISUNDERSTANDINGS

MATT. 18:15-17.

We cannot imagine a case in which a brother with average intelligence would need comfort and counsel in a misunderstanding other than that for which the Lord has provided in our text. If he has been in the habit of seeking sympathy in a busy-bodying manner, the sooner he knows that his course is wrong the better. He should learn to use his own mind along lines where there is positive instruction in the Scriptures. The Lord says to any one who has aught against his brother, "Go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone." If the matter is too small to mention to the brother, it is too small to notice and should be forgotten.

There are no exceptions to the rule laid down in Matt. 18:15-17; but there might be, under some circumstances, an interpretation of the rule. For instance, if the matter were in a family, there might be circumstances in which it would be proper to go to the head of the family. If it were in an institution, where the individual might be merely a representative of the Society, it would be proper to go to the head of the Society. Such a course would result from following Matt. 18:15, in its logical trend. But these are minor applications of the rule, which is neither voided nor avoided, but in applying which wisdom is being used in determining how the matter may be carried out.

There is no doubt that much of the trouble in the world is the result of misunderstanding. It therefore behooves every one of the Lord's people to "put on love, which is the bond of perfectness," and to overlook much of what others do. (Col. 3:14) And yet it would be proper for one who thinks that he has been wronged to go to the offending brother and have a clear understanding. To do so would result favorably in nearly every case.

The instruction in Matt. 18:15-17 is given, of course, only to the brethren, the church, and is not, therefore, to be applied outside. But whoever learns to apply this rule to the brethren will find that it commends itself to his best judgment as a wise course of conduct in all the affairs of life. Thus his natural inclination will be to apply the same principles in connection with worldly matters and worldly people. He must, however, use wisdom in considering which would be the wise way to deal with the world. Some of the deep and precious things which belong to the church the world would resent. So the Lord admonishes that we should not "cast our pearls before swine."

While we are endeavoring to do good to all men, yet in the case of the brethren there should be no discrimination in this matter. We might say, however, that some of the Lord's people seem to be unduly and unreasonably exercised along some lines. For instance, if a brother should find another brother in the truth who seemed to discriminate in his feelings and apparently to be more appreciative of another than of himself, he should not take offense. He should say, "There are differences of character and temperament; and Brother B. might commend himself to Brother A. more than would another. All that I may ask is that Brother A. shall love me; that he shall not hate me; that he shall not do me injury." Nothing in the Word of God indicates that the brethren are all to be esteemed alike!

Our Lord himself showed just such a discrimination in his love. He did it, however, "without partiality and without hypocrisy." But because of the differences in our fallen human nature some of the brethren are more congenial to us than are others. We should, therefore, be content to have the love of the brethren, and should endeavor to merit more of it—and to have our words and conduct such as to become more lovable to the brethren and thus to draw more of their esteem. The way to do this is, not by finding fault with those who do not love us up to the highest degree, but by trying to develop that character which would merit a fuller measure of love.

If such a question as this be raised and is not treated along the lines of Matt. 18:15, one should advise thus: "Brother A. seems to have none but the kindest feelings toward you, dear brother." Then if Brother B. says that he does not receive Brother A.'s love and companionship as does Brother C., one might reply, "Well, my dear brother, have we not the right to have a special fellowship with one if we do no injury to another? I think that we have, and that we have the Lord's example in this direction. This does not mean that I should treat you unkindly. It is not wrong for a brother to have more or less of a preference, providing that he does not use this preference to offend another intentionally."

VARYING DEGREES OF LOVE

Love is not justice. Love cannot be commanded; it must be induced; and there must be a cause for the love. It would be thoroughly out of order for any one to tell us that we should love God if he were not a lovable being. Similarly, how could we love any creature who is unlovely? We love the brethren because we see something of God-likeness in their good intentions, and in the fact that they have given their hearts to the Lord.

In a case where the brother's flesh is much fallen, we have largely a compassionate love, rather than a loving admiration; for only in proportion as we see character-likeness to Christ can we truly love his followers. But we should regard every brother and every sister with a sincere desire to do them good; and the same love, of course, should extend, as we have opportunity, to the world in general.

The great difficulty in cases of misunderstanding is that the Lord's counsel is not accurately followed. Good, honorable brethren, anxious to do right, who apparently would be quite competent to advise others, seem to think that theirs is a different case—seem not to exercise the proper judgment. Instead of going to the brother and saying, kindly, "Brother, I have come to see you in reference to a little matter, following the advice of Matt. 18:15," he, on the contrary, meets the brother and says, "Brother, you have done so and so." He goes to the brother, not to be reconciled, but rather, dictatorially, to show him that there is something wrong. This is not the right way to go about a matter. As surely as justice is the foundation of God's throne, just so surely are those who pursue this course failing to follow the principles of justice; they are

failing to develop the Lord's character and will fail to win the prize.

The spirit of the Lord's injunction is to help a brother, not to twit him, nor to anger him, nor to tease him; not to entrap him into saying what he did not intend to say, nor to distort the meaning of what he has said. Such is not the right spirit. No brother should be approached in this manner. But the matter should be considered in the most kindly way; and if then—in spite of all that one can do—the wrong is continued, we should have nothing more to say. Some might say, "He did not apologize." The Lord did not say anything about his apology. But if he recognizes that he is wrong and fails to apologize, he is doing himself injury.

LET US BEWARE OF BUSYBODYING

If the second step in Matt. 18:15-17 be found necessary, it should be taken only after very deliberate thought and prayer, with the desire to make sure of doing the Lord's will. First of all, one should make sure that the matter is of sufficient importance to ask the brethren to go along! and that it is something against us, not against another; that it is not busybodying; that it is something that is being done now. If this is the case, take two others along. Do not say, "If I ask you to go along, be sure to stand by me." We may be the ones in error; and if we are we should be more anxious to be corrected ourselves than to have the other brother corrected.

If we make sure that the matter is important, we should select two that we think would be friends of the brother injuring us—fair-minded, honorable people in the church. Then, after the party has met with the offending brother and discussed the case, it would be proper for these brethren to advise us. If the advice were something that we could follow, we should do so and bring peace and harmony.

But if this course should avail nothing and the injurious actions should continue, then it would be proper for us to bring the matter to the attention of the church. The two brethren who went with us, and decided with us that it was impossible to persuade the evil-doer to alter his course, should say to the elders of the church that they had a case to present for a hearing; but they should not make charges. The church is merely to hear the matter, to see whether there is any real cause of complaint. But at this stage of the affair they know merely that there is a case to be heard. Then the elders should call a special meeting for such a purpose, saying to the church that there is a case to be brought before the class, and asking what time would be convenient for them to hear the matter. Then the church should decide when to call a meeting to consider the case.

This would be the time for the one against whom the complaint lodges to say to the elders, "It is true that there were charges made against me by the brother, and that two others afterward came with him. But I claim, brethren, that the charges are not true, that the matter is one of my private concern, and that others have nothing to do with it;" or whatever he wishes to say. Then there must be brought evidence to show that there is really a matter to come before the church, that it is not merely a case of busybodying; for the church must not meet together to take part in busybodying.

Then it would be proper for the elders to learn enough to decide whether or not the church would be busybodying in this man's affairs—merely enough to inform themselves whether it were a matter to come before the church. If they thought that it was not, they should say to the offended one, "This brother is not doing you an injury." But if either of the parties still thought that it should be brought before the church —that Matt. 18:15-17 had been followed as far as possible to this point—and if the elders of the class were unwilling to bring it before the congregation, then it would be proper for the congregation to determine whether or not they would hear the case, and their hearing should be final.

HOW TO CONDUCT A CHURCH TRIAL

In any matter heard before the congregation there should be an opportunity for each one interested to present his side of the case—the one to state his trouble and the other to answer. At no stage of the proceedings should unkind words be permitted. The person who attempted to use them should be considered reprehensible on that account, and his conduct worthy of being judged a misdemeanor. This course is the one which the Lord evidently intended should be followed. The point, however, always to be borne in mind is whether people are really busybodying in other men's matters—a course which should not be encouraged, either by the class or by the elders. People waste a great deal of time in evil counsels, in a manner quite contrary to the Golden Rule and to Matt. 18:15.

If the congregation, after patiently hearing definite, positive charges of sufficient importance, finds that notwithstanding these various steps the brother against whom complaint is made has really been doing wrong and is continuing to do so, they should decide that he is guilty as charged. The vote of the church should be unanimous, if possible; all partisanship should be ignored. Since they are not condemning any one to eternal torment, nor judging him in any way, their advice must not carry with it any penalty whatever. They are merely advising the brother that his conduct is contrary to the Scriptures; and that if he does not change his course, they cannot longer treat him as one of the Lord's people.

In disfellowshipping him, they are not to ill-treat him; for we do not act so with publicans and sinners. But we would not ask a publican or a sinner to take part in the service, either as an elder or as a deacon or in any other capacity; so the offending brother is not to be asked to offer prayer, or to do anything that an outsider would not be asked to do. Thus the congregation would withdraw their fellowship. He is a brother still, but not in the best of standing; for he has neglected to hear the voice of the brethren in the way that the Lord has directed.

It might be possible, however, for a whole class to go astray in its judgment in a matter, and to decide against a brother who was in the right. This brother might then say, "My dear brethren, I appreciate your view in this matter; and I am sorry that anything in my course should seem to be worthy of condemnation. I promise you that I will modify the matter as best I am able. Although in justice to myself I cannot alter my view, nevertheless, in respect to your united voices I will not in the matter follow my judgment, which I feel is the correct one. And if, therefore, I suffer some injustice, the Lord will count it to me in the nature of a sacrifice for the sake of his body, the church. So, then, dear brethren, while thanking you for your kindly expressed sentiment, I still wish you to know that it does not do me justice. And I think that you will inform me of your change of mind on the subject if you ever should change."

If the brother were really in the wrong, he might say, "Well, then, put me out!" The class might say, "We are not putting you out. Do not say that you will withdraw from us. We will not take your remark for your answer. We hope that the Lord will have you see that our action has been most kindly, brotherly, and that it is a part of our duty now to conform to the views of the class. If the Lord shows us that we are wrong, we shall be very glad to acknowledge it. But in the meantime, dear brother, we do not wish to offend you, but merely desire to do our duty to the Lord and to his Word."

This course would be the proper one; we should not erect a barricade between brethren. But it would be very easy to do injury to such a brother by saying, "Well, never show your face here again unless you take back every word you have said." The majority of people have so much self-esteem that they would not go back after such a statement; whereas they might do so if the Spirit of the Lord, the Spirit of love and justice is manifested.

PERFECTION OF ORGANISM NOT NECESSARY TO TRIAL FOR LIFE

"He must reign till he hath put all enemies under his feet; the last enemy that shall be destroyed is death."—1 Cor. 15:25, 26.

The divine arrangement respecting Messiah's kingdom seems very clearly stated in the Scriptures. Our text above, if no other, proves that Messiah's kingdom will not be dealing with perfect conditions. By the sealing of the New Covenant he will make satisfaction for the sins of the world; and those of the world who prove worthy have God's assurance of attaining eternal life. The great work will be that of uplifting mankind out of sin and death conditions. For this reason he will rule as king and will officiate as the great Priest. The basis for this is the fact that our Lord Jesus purchased the world through the merit of his sacrifice.

"Where a tree falleth, there shall it be." (Eccl. 11:3) So, as mankind go down into death, there they remain. In the awakening from death there will be a resuscitation to practically the same conditions—mentally, morally and physically—which they had before they went into the tomb. If mankind came back from the tomb perfect, no one would have any way of identifying himself. If one were raised perfect in every thought and word and act, he would not know himself; for all those things composing his identity would be gone. Hence, he would have no way to distinguish himself from the rest of mankind! The world will be resuscitated with the same kind of in-

telligence in which they went down into death. But theirs is a death condition, and the very object of Messiah's kingdom is to uplift out of that condition, and to raise up that which was lost to the perfection of man's nature.

The Scriptures show us that at the end of the thousand years of Christ's reign the whole world will be turned over to the Father; and the race will then have a trial time, a testing, just as Adam had when he was in Eden. For "a little season" Satan will have the power to tempt mankind as he tempted mother Eve. But the world should then be so thoroughly established in righteousness of heart that nothing which Satan or any other being could bring upon them in the way of temptation would make them sin; and those who will not have learned to hate sin and to love righteousness will not be fit for eternal life. We read that fire [judgments] will come down from heaven and destroy such.

ONE HUNDRED YEARS OF TRIAL

But we are to remember that there is another trial which precedes that occurring at the end of the Millennial age. From the very time when the kingdom shall have been established, the world will be on trial. Under The Christ's beneficent rule some will avail themselves of the opportunity to rise gradually back to the perfection of human nature, lost in Eden; others, apparently, according to the Scriptures, will still maintain an attitude of rebellion, loving sin and hating righteousness. These will be granted a hundred years (Isa. 65:17-25) of trial, even though they do not come to perfection of mind and body, because of their rebellious attitude of heart.

Such are spoken of as children, in comparison with others of that day who will live on and become perfect. Messiah, as the great Judge, will cause such to die accursed, condemned, cut off from further opportunity of attaining life; for such will not have benefited by the merit of Christ and the kingdom of Christ. And if this would be true of their condition after one hundred years, we may infer that if any, who during the first hundred years had proved faithful, should during the second hundred years assume a position against righteousness, such would then be cut off from life.

"THE SAINTS SHALL JUDGE THE WORLD"

"Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world?" (1 Cor. 6:2) We certainly know it. The work of giving mankind the necessary knowledge and assistance will be in the hands of Christ and the church. The final sentence against sinners will be destruction, death, as is clearly shown in the parable (Matt. 25:31-46) where Jesus (with the church) is pictured in power and great glory judging the world, "For God hath appointed a day in which he will judge the world in righteousness by that Man whom he hath ordained" (Acts 17:31—the day of the great Messiah, the antitypical Moses—Jesus, the Head, and the church, his body. The parable shows that the work of the Millennial age will completely separate the "sheep" class from the "goats"—the "sheep" being on the right hand (place of favor) and the "goats" at the left (place of disfavor). At the end of the age Messiah will destroy the goat class and, in the Father's name, bless all the sheep class. But nothing is more evident than that the trial for life or death will proceed during all the Millennial age—throughout all that thousand-year judgment day.

MERIT IMPUTED BY THE GREAT ADVOCATE

Now the church is on trial for life or death, and Christ gives us an imputation of his merit and thus covers our weaknesses and shortcomings. By and by, he will give the world actual perfection on condition of perfect obedience. But now, under the great Advocate's imputation of righteousness, the decision regarding the church comes in a few years from the time when we reach the point of consecration unto death. If this time is sufficient for the accomplishing of the trial of the church, then we can see that a hundred years is ample time for the world to see whether they will make even a little progress upward on the highway of holiness.

The testing of the church we recognize as a fact; for the Apostle points it out to us. If those who are now consecrated should fall away into sin, there remains no more sacrifice for sins. (Heb. 10:26, 27) Why? Because the imputation of Christ's merit will not be repeated to any. If we get the imputation of Christ's merit in this present life, then there will be no further imputation for us. Those who do not get the imputation of Christ's merit now, as the church, will never get it; but instead they will get the benefit of the New Covenant. The effect, however, in either event, will be a life or death trial and a life or death sentence.

"BE THOU FAITHFUL"

In the case of the church, if we were faithful until the very last day of our experience and on that day proved unfaithful, it would certainly settle the matter as to our future. Similarly, we may say of the world that, if any should prove unfaithful during their trial in the next age, their trial would end immediately and, undoubtedly, the sentence would be to the second death. In other words, the trial continues until each individual has been either rewarded or punished; and every act down to the last has to do with the sentence of that trial.

In Ezekiel there is an intimation along this line, where God says, "But if the wicked will turn from all his sins that he hath committed, and keep all my statutes, and do that which is lawful and right, he shall surely live, he shall not die. All his transgressions that he hath committed, they shall not be mentioned unto him; in his righteousness that he hath done he shall live. . . . But when the righteous turneth away from his righteousness, and committeth iniquity, . . . shall he live? All his righteousness that he hath done shall not be mentioned; in his trespass that he hath trespassed, and in his sin that he hath sinned, in them shall he die." (Ezek. 18:21-24) This seems to be the principle of divine justice, and one to which we can all readily assent, and which we can recognize as just and righteous altogether. "Just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints."

THE GOSPEL ONLY FOR SINNERS

MARK 2:13-22.—MARCH 24.

TEXT:—*"I came not to call the righteous, but sinners."*—Verse 17.

The term "Publican" in Jesus' day was applied to Jews who served the Roman Government as tax collectors in Palestine. The name was a reproach because the Jews held to the Abrahamic promise that the whole world should be blessed by them as God's peculiar people. They held that this meant that they should not only be free from all other governments, but that they should be the masters of the world. And if so, all other nations should be paying them tribute and they should pay tribute to none. The most public-spirited Jews, therefore, declined to be the agents of the Roman government in the matter of collecting tribute or taxes, and the tribute-takers or publicans were looked upon with disdain as being unfaithful to their religion and to their nation.

The term "sinner," as frequently used in this study and elsewhere in the Gospels, was applied to all Jews who were careless in respect to the orthodoxy of their day, for the orthodox Jew of that time (and today) took pride in his religion and boasted of his holiness—as, for instance, the word "Pharisee" signifies "holy person"—one scrupulously careful in observing the smallest details of the law. There was a wide breach between these zealous followers of Moses' law and the mass of the nation who, because of not making special profession, were altogether classed as "sinners," or persons not up to the orthodox standard of carefulness of form, ceremonies, etc.

The Pharisees would tolerate and eat with the Sadducees, although the latter were practically unbelievers, because they were of the wealthier and therefore more respectable class; but they entirely ignored and would not eat with their less particular brethren, whom they in general styled "sinners," regardless of their having true moral status.

Our Lord's disciples were nearly all gathered from this lower or less orthodox and less educated class of Jews. Because of our Lord's talents the Pharisees would have been glad to have him as one of their number, provided, of course, that he would side with them and uphold them in their more or less hypocritical pretentions of perfection and holiness. But Jesus denounced the claims of the Pharisees as hypocritical, and told the common people plainly that there were "none righteous, no, not one"—that all needed divine mercy, and that really the humble and contrite would be much more acceptable to God than the boastful, the proud, the self-conceited.

MATTHEW THE PUBLICAN

Today's study tells of the call of Matthew to be one of the twelve Apostles. His original name was Levi, just as Peter's original name was Simon. He belonged to the Levitical tribe, but his acceptance of service under the Romans as a tax collector socially degraded him and classed him as a "publican." Perhaps the quality of independence and humble-mindedness which influenced this man to become a tax collector and to brave the scorn of his fellow-countrymen were qualities which really favored him in respect to the divine invitation to become a disciple of Jesus. We may be sure this was true from

the fact that Jesus gave him a special invitation to become his disciple, and from the fact that he was in the heart condition to forsake all of his earthly goods that he might be a member of the Messianic class. We cannot suppose that the Master would call to discipleship any but a noble character, nor can we suppose that any others would have accepted the call as did Matthew.

Matthew was a householder and promptly invited Jesus and his followers to dinner. He invited in also numbers of his friends, and these, like himself, were of the ostracised class—publicans and sinners. The scribes and Pharisees watched Jesus closely, and when they perceived that he ate and mingled with the less respectable and less orthodox, they disesteemed him also, and put the question squarely to Jesus' disciples: "How is it that your Master eateth and drinketh with publicans and sinners, and yet claims to be holy?"

This afforded Jesus the opportunity which he desired of giving a great lesson in a few words. He replied to them, "They that are whole have no need of a physician, but they that are sick; I came to call, not the righteous, but sinners." Here we have the key to much of the misunderstanding of the Gospel in that day and now. The first lesson that all must learn is that all sin is condemned of God—the little and the large—and that all unrighteousness is sin, and that there is "none righteous, no, not one."

In other words, each must learn that he himself is a sinner, and under divine sentence and needing forgiveness, before he can come into fellowship with God or become partaker of God's provision for eternal life. The publicans and sinners were indeed condemned of God, and the scribes and Pharisees, members of the same imperfect race, were also under divine sentence; but the latter did not admit their sinfulness and imperfection nor seek divine forgiveness, while the former, admitting their sins, were the more ready to accept forgiveness. Jesus illustrated this matter in one of his parables saying, A certain Pharisee went to the temple to pray and, full of self-confidence, thanked God that he was not as other men, nor even like the poor Publican near him. The Publican also prayed; but in humility, feeling that he was a sinner, besought divine forgiveness. Jesus declared that the less moral man, the less scrupulously careful man, the Publican, was nearer to divine justice than the more careful, more upright, more orthodox Pharisee, because the latter failed to acknowledge his sins, his imperfections, which could be forgiven only through their acknowledgment. Hence the declaration of Jesus that he "came not to call the righteous, but sinners." There were none righteous to call, for all are sinners, and those who thought themselves righteous had a barrier before them which hindered their coming to the Lord under the call of this age.

"THY DISCIPLES FAST NOT"

About that time a fasting season was observed by the Pharisees, and also by those who had accepted the teachings of John the Baptist; but Jesus had said nothing to his disciples about fasting up to that time. Now the question arose, Why was this? The Savior's explanation was that while he was with them it should properly be considered a time of rejoicing and feasting rather than a time of fasting and sorrow. Would a betrothed woman sorrow and weep and fast while her betrothed was present? Nay. Yet, in subsequent days, after his departure, in her loneliness, and especially if she thought of the long delay in his coming to receive her to become his wife, she would sorrow. So Jesus intimated it would be with his followers. They would have plenty of opportunity to weep and fast after he would be gone and while waiting for his return.

Fasting should not be considered a matter of obligation or command, but rather a voluntary sacrifice of present and temporal good things that the mind and heart might go out the more earnestly after the things not seen as yet, but hoped for. Thus for eighteen centuries God's people have been fasting and praying and waiting and longing for the Bridegroom's return. But in the time of his presence, their fellowship with him, their joy in the realization of the completed promises, will wipe away their tears and "give them beauty for ashes, and the oil of joy for . . . . the spirit of heaviness."

THE CHURCH A NEW CREATION

It was difficult for the Savior's hearers to get a proper focus upon his teachings. They could understand John the Baptist's preaching of repentance and reformation; but when Jesus declared, "The law and the prophets were until John, and since then the kingdom of heaven is preached"—this was so radical a proposition as to be difficult for the masses to grasp. What could be higher than the Law and the Prophets? What door could be opened to the followers of Jesus which had not been open to their forefathers? Was not their Jewish nation God's kingdom? Did not King David sit "upon the throne of the Lord"? Was it not promised that Messiah should sit upon David's throne?

Sympathetically we must concede that it was difficult for the Jews to understand that before the blessing could come to natural Israel, another, spiritual Israel, must be selected. By way of emphasizing this thought, our Lord gave two parabolical illustrations, saying, No man sews a piece of unshrunken cloth upon an old garment, because the shrinking of the new cloth would pull away the old and increase the difficulty. Likewise, no one would think of putting new wine which had not yet finished its fermentation into old wineskins, whose elasticity had been exhausted, for the old wineskins would be burst by the fermentation of the new wine.

These illustrations show that the Gospel teaching is not a patch upon the Jewish law, but is a new proposition. And the new wine of the Gospel dispensation must be put into new wineskins that will be able to stand the stress of the fermentation sure to come. Thus our Lord did not attempt to engraft his teachings upon the Jews, but called out of Judaism a special class, which the Scriptures denote as "new creatures in Christ." It is to these that the new wine of the Gospel message is committed, and these are to experience the fermentation incidental to the preparation for the kingdom—trials, disciplines and testings.

"MILLENNIAL BEAN" SEED SUPPLY EXHAUSTED

The requests for five of the prolific beans for seed by far exceed the supply donated by Sister Smith.

In reply to various inquiries from those who requested these seed beans, we are informed by Sister Smith that there are advantages in planting them in an onion bed or row—at a distance of six feet. An insect, which proves destructive to the bean plant, seems to dislike the onions, and is thus kept away. After the onions are harvested, the beans grow very fast, if the ground is kept loose on the surface. It is also suggested that great care should be exercised in gathering the pods, not to injure the bushes, by pulling, or breaking off the leaves. If the first crop of beans is allowed to remain on the bushes until fully ripened, there will be no additional yield and the bush will die. If they are to bear repeatedly, the pods must be removed as soon as large enough to eat, we are told, and then new blossoms take the place of the first crop.

"THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD"

Qr. Review.—March 31.

Text:—*"The people which sat in darkness saw great light; and to them which sat in the region and shadow of death light is sprung up."*—Matthew 4:16.

In the Bible symbols light stands as the representative of God, of Christ, of the church, of truth, of influences for righteousness, which by and by as the Sun of Righteousness shall arise with healing in its beams for the cure of all the masses of the earth. It will scatter the darkness of sin, ignorance and superstition—the works of the prince of darkness, who will then "be bound for a thousand years that he may deceive the nations no more until the thousand years are finished." Of the heavenly Father we read, "God is light, and in him is no darkness at all."

Of Jesus we read, "I am the light of the world." Of the church in her present condition we read, "Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works and glorify your Father which is in heaven." "Hide not your light under a bushel, but set it on a candlestick that it may give light unto all that are in the house." Nevertheless, "The darkness hateth the light, neither cometh to the light," and "the whole world lieth in the wicked one"—in darkness. Notwithstanding the faithfulness of Jesus and the few light-bearers enlightened with the holy Spirit of which they are begotten, still "darkness covers the earth and gross darkness the heathen."

This same thought pervades the Scriptures from first to last, namely, that for six thousand years, from the time of the entrance of sin to the second coming of Jesus, the world will be subject to a reign of sin and death—it will be under a pall

of darkness, ignorance, superstition, sin, etc. The only ones who will see the path of righteousness distinctly will be those guided by the "lantern"—God's Word. They are represented as saying, "Thy Word is a lamp to my feet and a lantern to my footsteps." St. Peter, writing to the church from the same standpoint, declares, "We (the church) have a more sure Word of prophecy whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place until the day dawn."—Psa. 119:105; 2 Peter 1:19.

The prince of darkness has been in command for centuries. The only lights of the past were the noble prophets of the Jewish line whose lights affected few in their own nation, and were not discernible at all amongst the heathen world. John the Baptist, we are told, was a burning and shining light, and Jesus was a still more brilliant light, and his faithful few during the past eighteen centuries have shined forth, reflecting their Master's light. But all of these have had comparatively little influence in the world. It still lies in the wicked one—in darkness, seeing not, neither understanding divine things; it is still "waiting for the manifestation of the sons of God."

A BETTER DAY COMING

Our text tells of a better day sure to come. It is not sure to come because of the operation of the evolutionary law, for the natural law would seem to contradict such a thought. Darkness leads on to darkness more intense, and while light begets light, darkness begets darkness, and the masses are in the darkness, and in the wicked one, the prince of darkness. Never, then, might we hope for the abolishment of darkness except in the way in which God has foretold it—through the establishment of Messiah's kingdom—through the shining forth of the Son of Righteousness—the church in glory.—Matt. 13:43.

Our text is a quotation from the Old Testament; it had a beginning of its fulfilment in our Savior and in the Apostles. The people of Palestine, long in doubt, uncertainty, etc., saw a great light in Jesus and his teachings. And throughout this Gospel age, for more than eighteen centuries, this great light has been exercising a feeble influence amongst men. The Light itself has been pure—the divine Word and the principles of divine righteousness. But, alas! few have been faithful in receiving the light in its purity and in reflecting it forth upon others.

In general the light has been corrupted by human selfishness, by sin. As a consequence the name Christian today does not stand for all the blessed light and truth and grace and faithfulness to God and to the principles of love which the Master showed forth and inculcated. Instead the name Christian today is borne by about four hundred millions of humanity, many of whom, judged by the divine standard of their "fruits," are children of the wicked one, children of darkness, who merely use the garment of light, the name Christian, as a heavenly livery whereby to appease their own consciences and to increase their opportunity for selfishness and acquisition, quite contrary to the Leader whom they profess to be following, "the true Light."

"WHICH LIGHTETH EVERY MAN"

The Apostle declares that Jesus "is the true light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world." (John 1:9) The expression, "true light," implies that there are false or imitation lights, and of these we know that there are many—lights of heathendom and lights of Christendom. The only true light, however, is that which shone forth in our Savior's teachings and example. It has thus far enlightened only a few, a "little flock." These, like their Master, are urged to let their light shine before men that others may take knowledge that they have been with Jesus and learned of him—that they are his disciples, his followers, bearing, in his footsteps, the same light which shone forth from him.

After eighteen centuries of experience of the light battling with the darkness, and at times being almost quenched thereby, we might well ask, what hope is there that this prophecy will ever be fulfilled—that Jesus, as the Light of the world, will enlighten every man born into the world? The Bible answers that God will fulfil this very matter in his own time, but that God's time cannot be hastened—that before the world will be enlightened, a saintly class, the church, the bride of Christ, must be enlightened, and must be completed and glorified together with her Lord.

FOR ONE THOUSAND YEARS THE SUN OF RIGHTEOUSNESS WILL SHINE FORTH

Then, and not until then, will the Savior and his church in glory be the great Sun of Righteousness which will arise over the earth, and shine forth for the healing of the people, for the scattering of the darkness of sin and the lies of error—the bringing of life, peace, joy and blessing to all who will accept the favor in harmony with the divine requirements; but to smite down and utterly destroy the night, and those who will still love darkness, and would corrupt the earth.

For a thousand years the glorious Sun of Righteousness (Christ and the church, his bride), will shine out. The work will be thorough and complete. Adam and his every child will be fully brought to a knowledge of the truth, and will enjoy the blessed opportunity of coming back into harmony with God, by the restitution process, of which St. Peter tells us in Acts 3:19-23. This will not mean that the world will ever become members of the Bride class, or ever attain the spirit nature. It means restitution to the condition first enjoyed by Adam, lost by sin, but redeemed by the sacrifice finished at Calvary. It means human perfection to all the willing and obedient of Adam's race through the heavenly Second Adam and the heavenly Second Eve.

It means a world-wide paradise, filled with the blessings of the Lord, who has promised that the earth, as his footstool, shall be made glorious. It means that, with the destruction of the wilfully disobedient, this earth will be like heaven. The Savior's prayer will reach fulfilment; God's will shall be done on earth even as it is done in heaven. This in turn will mean that "every knee will bow and every tongue confess," both of the things in heaven and of the things on earth, to the glory of God. And this signifies that there shall be no more sighing, no more crying, no more dying on earth, even as none of these things are in heaven.

Then our text will have most ample fulfilment—all mankind shall see the great Light which God has provided; even those "in the shadow of death" must come forth, that all may be enlightened by this "true Light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world." O the happy day that is coming to our poor, sin-cursed earth! There shall be no more curse, thank God! Instead of the curse shall be the divine blessing; "and every creature in heaven and on earth and under the earth shall be heard saying, 'Praise and glory and honor and dominion and might be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb, forever'"!

SOME INTERESTING QUESTIONS

FEAR THE ADVERSARY'S TACTICS

Question.—"Your adversary, the devil, as a roaring lion walketh about, seeking whom he may devour; whom resist, steadfast in the faith." (1 Pet. 5:8) In what sense does the adversary go about as a roaring lion?

Answer.—The Scriptures give us various illustrations of Satan, the "angel of light." He is compared to a serpent, a roaring lion, etc. Of course, he does not fill all of these pictures at one moment, nor does he go about as a roaring lion all the time. It is the custom of the lion to roar when in pursuit of food. The roar of the lion makes his prey—including human beings—semi-paralyzed. From personal observation, we see that fear is one of the most disastrous things for the Lord's people to have—except "fear of the Lord," which is proper fear. As God incites by love, so Satan incites through fear, through false doctrines, the root of error, which so terrorizes mankind as to the future. This kind of influence from the adversary is what is meant by the Apostle. But we are to resist Satan.

Once the Apostles were under threat from the Jewish Sanhedrin; and they prayed, "Now, Lord, behold their threatenings." This statement, however, does not prove that the men of the Sanhedrin were devils, nor that they were viciously inclined of themselves. So today there are some people more or less beclouded by the threatenings of those who are seeking to intimidate the Lord's people. We are to be of good courage. When we hear the roaring of the lion we are to remember that the Lord is on our part and that he does not cause us to fear. The thought that Satan opposes us and that we are contending not merely with the fallen flesh, but also with wicked spirits in high positions of power, would appal us if we did not, by positiveness of decision, acquire great help from other unseen powers. From the instant that we resist temptation and stand up for the Lord and his cause we become strong in the Lord and in the power of his might. "If God be for us, who can be against us?"

LIGHT INCREASES RESPONSIBILITY

Question.—"If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin; but now they have no cloak for their sin."—John 15:22. Please explain.

Answer.—Our Lord explained to the scribes and Pharisees that the light of his teaching gave a greater responsibility to those who heard it than to those who had not heard it. If they had never come in contact with the light, they would

never have sinned against the light; and therefore, their sin was greater in proportion to the greater blessing.

So it is today. If you had never had your eyes opened, if you had never heard more than the heathen, then you would not have any more sin than other heathen people whose eyes have never been opened. But when you sin with a measure of wilfulness against the light and knowledge, your sin will be the greater. Your responsibility is in proportion to the light. This seems to be the reasonable view of the matter.

DIFFERENCE BETWEEN FRUITS AND GRACES OF SPIRIT

Question.—What is the difference between "the fruits of the Spirit" and "the graces of the Spirit?"

Answer.—The expression "fruits of the Spirit" has very much the same significance as "graces of the Spirit." One term might be proper to use at one time and the other at another time, according to the figure of speech which would be appropriate. If we were speaking of a quality which was being developed, it would be proper to think of the fruitage of the Spirit—those beautiful qualities worked out in our lives through the indwelling of the Spirit of God. If we were speaking more particularly of the individual and his conduct, we might more appropriately say that the graces which he manifested and which he had developed were brought out through his possession of the holy spirit, through his possession of the spirit of love.

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"THE RESURRECTION OF THE JUST AND OF THE UNJUST"

Acts 24:15.

The resurrection of the just could not mean a resurrection of those who had been perfect, for there are none perfect, none just, "no, not one." "The resurrection of the just," then, must mean the resurrection of those who have been justified; and the justified are those referred to in the Scriptures of whom Abraham was an example. Abraham believed God, and was justified by faith. It was the faith that justified, and the works corroborated the faith.

So with the church of this age. The Apostle says, "Being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom, also, we have access by faith into this grace wherein, we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God." (Rom. 5:1, 2) We are not only justified out of sin, but are also brought by operation of our faith into the glorious standing of members of Christ; and we may hope to participate with Christ in the glories of his kingdom in the future. It is one thing to be freed from guilt, and another thing to be raised to the position of sons of God, heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ, our Lord.

The resurrection of the dead is similarly spoken of in John 5:28, 29, where we read, "Marvel not at this, for the hour is coming in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth." The Lord does not mean merely all the good, for he also includes in this all that are in their graves. We read in the context that they that have done good shall come forth "unto the resurrection of life": those who have done evil shall come forth to "damnation." The word damnation, in the Greek, signifies a crisis, a turning-point, a decision.

THE RESURRECTION OF THE CHURCH

Those whose faith enables them to stand through evil report and through good report, and who thus fulfil the Divine requirement, are character-likenesses of Jesus. These now pass from under the condemnation condition to the life condition. As the Apostle says, "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." (1 John 3:14) This passing from death unto life is not in the full sense in the present time. By faith we are reckoned dead with Christ, counted members of his body. That future life is reckoned to us. We are counted as having it; and this is our condition because we have the divine approval.

Since there is none good, the only sense in which one could "do good" would be by coming into accord with God by obedience, as under the covenant which prevailed with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, or under the still higher covenant that prevails with the church in this Gospel age. We have this testimony, that we are pleasing to God, who indicates his pleasure by begetting us of the holy Spirit. In contradistinction, the world are aliens, foreigners. (Eph. 2:19) By this holy Spirit, this "unction from the Holy One," therefore, we have the evidence of acceptance with the Father.

The outcome will be, that those having this approval of God, having passed the trials and testings which they have received —for he receiveth no son whom he does not scourge (Heb. 12:6) —and having proved faithful to the end, will be raised by the Lord to the very highest place—glory, honor and immortality. This is the crown, or very highest pinnacle of life that could be imagined. So, then, those who will have part in this first resurrection will reign with Christ a thousand years. This is the first class mentioned by the Apostle. They are approved; they shall come forth to "life resurrection."

What is the significance of "life resurrection"? We answer that these shall come forth to perfect life instantly. As St. Paul says, "It is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory; it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power; it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spirit body." Thus instantaneously these blessings come to them. They have their trial in the present time and, therefore, theirs will be the chief resurrection.

THE RESURRECTION OF THE WORLD

But all will have a resurrection. How will the resurrection of the world differ from that apportioned to the church? The world has not had the divine approval; the heathen have not had the divine approval. The Apostle says, "How shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard?" (Rom. 10:14) They are not fit for heaven. They are not fit to be with the angels or with the saints, no matter how they came to be in this condition. They came into this condition because of heredity, as children of Adam. But they could not have the same kind of resurrection that those will receive who have God's approval now, at the time of their death: "Be thou faithful unto death and I will give thee a crown of life."

So with the majority of those in Christian lands. They could not be thought to be fit for heaven or to have God's approval in any sense of the word. And they know it. They confess it themselves. Nobody could deny that nine hundred and ninety-nine out of every thousand are living "after the flesh." They are not saints, but have the divine disapproval, some having heard more of the Word of God, and some having heard less.

THE GENERAL RESURRECTION TO BE GRADUAL

"Those who have done evil" will come forth to the resurrection of "damnation" (Greek, *krisis*), resurrection of trial, resurrection of testing. What kind will it be? The Scriptures show us that it will be a gradual resurrection. During the thousand years of Christ's reign the people will be awakening from the sleep in the tomb. This awakening will be a preparatory work, not the full resurrection, which will require the entire thousand years.

But the divine provision is that the account will have been settled for the whole world, so that when they shall come forth from the tomb in the future they will be in the hands of the Redeemer, whose kingdom will be world-wide. They will have the opportunity of being raised again to that which was lost. Human perfection was lost, which includes not only perfect physical health, but perfect mental power; for mental power depends upon the brain, is affected by the brain, as well as by the body, so that men are now in a dying condition, mentally, morally and physically.

None will be fully raised, from imperfection to perfection, until the end of the thousand years. All who will respond to the beneficent arrangements will secure that which Father Adam enjoyed at first—perfect manhood. Those who will not be obedient to the requirements of Christ's kingdom will be cut off in the second death. They will be destroyed as brute beasts, having had the full measure of divine favor.—2 Pet. 2:12.

"And the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished." (Rev. 20:5) When the sentence came upon Father Adam he was thrust out of Eden. All of his children have been born dying, and are still in a dying condition. Therefore, the raising of man out of sin and death will be the bringing of him to full perfection—perfect life. This will be a gradual process. They will be made more alive and more alive, and less dead and less dead, as the thousand years progress, and none will get the resurrection life until they are raised to the condition of perfection—perfect life in the image of God, which was lost by Adam.

BURNING OF THE WORLD SYMBOLICAL

The Scriptures declare that "the earth abideth forever" and that "God formed it not in vain; he made it to be inhabited." (See Eccl. 1:4; Isa. 45:18) It has not yet reached the blessed condition when it will blossom as a rose, although it is in process of completion. At the end of the thousand years of Christ's reign, the whole earth shall have been brought to perfection. In

the prophecies, mountains are symbolical of kingdoms. In 2 Peter 3:12 the Apostle's words signify that there will be a great conflagration and that the heavens also will be on fire, but that, nevertheless, there will be a new order of things, to take the place of the old order; and under this new order of things there shall come a blessing to all in the earth. The word "fire," in this sense, signifies destruction of the present order of things, of the kosmos—not the ge, the earth, but the social system, society as at present organized.

We not infrequently hear people say, "Well, matters are getting pretty hot!" Yes, the battle between capital and labor is getting hotter, as is evidenced lately in the labor troubles, particularly in Great Britain and the United States. But the time of conflagration will be such a "time of trouble," that it will entirely consume the present order of things, a time of trouble, therefore, that will be epoch-making, and the new epoch will be introduced immediately thereafter.

MOUNTAINS SYMBOLIZE KINGDOMS

We remember riding over the mountains once with an Adventist. The Adventist brother said, "Do you not think it will be a glorious time when these mountains will be brought down to a level?" We said, "Dear brother, the mountains are very beautiful, very useful." He said, "You cannot raise corn on this mountain." "Well," said we, "go to the prairie if you want to raise corn." Then he said, "What do you think the Scriptures mean when they say that the mountains shall be brought low, and when they speak about the melting of the earth"? We said, "Dear brother, the 'mountains' there are kingdoms. We read that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be exalted in the top of the mountains'; it will be the chief mountain or kingdom."—Isa. 2:2.

THE RESURRECTION WILL LEVEL ALL CLASSES

The Psalmist tells us that "the mountains shall be removed and carried into the midst of the sea," mountains being symbolical of the kingdoms, of the governments of the earth, and society in general, the elements which support the governments. (Psa. 46) St. Peter also speaks as though the whole world will be consumed by fire. These things are symbolical, implying that the people who are now in a low condition will be brought up, and that those who are high will be brought low. Thus there will be a leveling process.

We remember the statement of the Scripture in Zephaniah, "Wait ye upon me, saith the Lord." Here Jehovah is speaking to the church, telling us that we should not be dissatisfied, that we should not be anarchists and strife-breeders: I shall attend to this matter myself. You can rest with the present order of things. "Wait ye upon me, saith the Lord, until the day that I rise up to the prey; for my determination is to gather the nations, that I may assemble the kingdoms, to pour upon them mine indignation, even all my fierce anger; for all the earth shall be devoured with the fire of my jealousy." That this fire is not literal is shown in the next sentence: "Then will I turn unto the people a pure message, that they may all call upon the name of the Lord to serve him with one consent."—Zeph. 3:8, 9.

WHEN "THE SPIRIT AND THE BRIDE SAY, 'COME'"

It will be the work of the thousand years of Messiah's reign to thus make known the pure message of God, the pure Word of God. We all see, as we look back, that a pure message of God has not been declared to mankind, but creed contradicting creed, making confusion worse confounded. The Lord, however, will pour out his Spirit upon all flesh, and the knowledge of the Lord shall cover the earth as the waters cover the great deep. (Isa. 11:9; Hab. 2:14) As the Revelator puts it, "the river of the water of life" will flow freely.—Rev. 21:6; 22:1, 2.

We see that there is no throne yet established and that there is no bride now. We are waiting for the time to come when the throne will be established and when "the water of life" will flow out. In the future it will be "a river of the water of life." This cannot take place until the second coming of our Lord; consequently, it will be after that, in the glorious time of Messiah's kingdom, when the Spirit and the bride will say, "Come!" The election of the church of God will then have been completed; and every creature will come to a knowledge of the truth and will have the opportunity of attaining to the full perfection made possible by the redemptive work of Christ.

THE RELATIONSHIP OF THE CHURCH TO EARTHLY SOCIETY

The spirit condition is spoken of as a heavenly condition in the sense that the words heaven and heavenly in the Scriptures are used to signify higher. So the heaven to which the church will be taken is this higher condition. But the mission of the church in the next age is in connection with humanity. We are, then, to understand that the Lord and the church will be present, operating through human, earthly agents; supervising, overruling.

We have an example of this invisible power in Satan, who has been ruling here for over six thousand years, through his agents. His work is a deceptive work. He has ruled mankind through ignorance, superstition, etc. But the rule of Christ will be the scattering of error, superstition. The world shall know the truth that the truth may make them free. Those who will receive the truth will receive the freedom and will eventually attain the liberty which belongs to the sons of God. Men will be quite visible to The Christ, but they will be invisible to men. It is in respect to these that the Lord said that the twelve Apostles shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel—that the Apostles shall be associates with him in judging and ruling the world.

Then there is another class: "Ye shall see Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and all the prophets in the kingdom of God"; but our Lord does not say a word about their seeing himself or his apostles. He and his apostles will be in the invisible phase of the kingdom. So it is written, "Instead of thy fathers shall be thy children, whom thou mayest make princes in all the earth." (Psa. 45:16) The patriarchs will be considered the children. A father is a life-giver. While in one sense of the word Abraham and Isaac, etc., might be considered fathers, yet by virtue of Christ's redemptive work he will give them life and they will be his children; for whoever gives life is the father and whoever receives life is the child. They will be princes in all the earth, not on the heavenly plane, but on the earthly plane, having obtained the "better resurrection" because they were faithful. Each one of them will be a sample of perfect manhood; and each one of them will be a prince or ruler. Their wisdom will be a wisdom superintended by the church in glory.

THE OBJECT OF THE INDIVIDUAL TRIAL OF MANKIND

Mankind will need to be put on trial to see whether or not they will accept God's plan with the knowledge they will have received. If they accept they will be adjudged worthy of everlasting life. If they fail to come into harmony, they will be adjudged worthy of everlasting death. But this judgment will be passed by Christ and his bride.

So, then, we see that there is a great judgment or trial coming to the world to give them the opportunity of deciding whether or not they will come into harmony with the arrangements of Christ's kingdom. In the work of judging, the church will be associated with Christ. We read that God "hath appointed a day, in which he will judge the world in righteousness by that Man whom He hath ordained" (Acts 17:31) Christ, the Head, and the church his body. Again, "Know ye not that the saints shall judge the world?" (1 Cor. 6:2) Therefore our own judgment or trial takes place in advance, that we may be prepared to try or judge the world; and by the experiences through which we have passed. we may be assistful to them, as they shall be on trial and under our control.

DEGREES OF SIN AND THEIR PUNISHMENT

The question is often asked, "Is there any special punishment for thieves, murderers and other criminals, or will they, if repentant, be received into the kingdom along with those who have tried to do right throughout their lives?"

This question can be viewed from two standpoints. God himself is the great determiner of right and wrong. Everything that is right God approves; everything that is wrong God disapproves. The things that God approves are those things that are good, helpful and favorable for everybody. The things that God disapproves are the things that are wrong, unjust. injurious to every one. Therefore God has condemned certain things that are unjust or injurious to ourselves or to others. Whoever, therefore, commits sin, violates first of all, a divine command, and to that extent has a certain penalty attached to him for that wrong doing.

We speak of certain persons as "sowing their wild oats." What does this expression signify? It means that they are now contracting habits which are injurious not only to their own health and happiness, but probably to that of others. As a result of practising sin they are sure to bring upon themselves a degradation of both mind and body. Thus sin brings its own reward in a natural way. Whoever sins will suffer, is the general law. But aside from that law, there is a God, who has given certain commands and certain penalties that go with those commands.

WHO ARE THIEVES AND MURDERERS?

God's standard of righteousness is much higher than is man's present standard. Our Lord gave very fine meanings to the words "thief," "adulterer," and "murderer." He taught that anyone who is angry with his brother without a cause is in danger; that he who looks upon another's wife with impure desire has committed adultery. (Matt. 5:22, 28) These are very fine distinctions. Moreover, we must all admit, as Shakespeare has said:—

"Who steals my purse steals trash;
. . . . . .
But he that filches from me my good name
Robs me of that which not enriches him,
And makes me poor indeed."

Many people have been guilty of stealing the good name of others; many have been guilty of murder in the sense that they hate others. When it comes to the point of deciding who are the most guilty murderers and thieves, we are not competent to judge, for we are not able to know the qualities of mind and the weaknesses with which each person was born. God only could tell the degree of wrong in any of these cases. There are some people who are, we might say, naturally good; others seem to have been born with less patience. Some who, naturally, would not get angry with their brother, nor with any one, as soon as some one else would, may never be in danger of committing murder, either literally or figuratively; for they are born with the quality of forbearance.

As these may not manifest any special patience more than that with which they were born, so others may manifest special qualities because of the condition in which they were born.

The world has learned the necessity of restraining those who are injurious to others. The judgment of the people of the state of New York is, according to the law, that no murderer shall be at large. He shall be confined; for a murderer is not a safe person to permit in society. Therefore, he is put into prison or is executed. This is the general judgment, outside of God's judgment. The best thing for him and the world in general is that he go down to hades, sheol—the great state of death, where he cannot murder anyone else. The Scriptures agree with the laws of the state of New York, that if a man commits heinous crimes he should be punished.

GOD IS TRAINING THE JUDGES NOW

But so far as taking the position of a judge is concerned, we are not capable of doing this. God alone, at the present time, knows how much more worthy of punishment some are who are in prison than some who are out of prison would be for something else. The offense of the prisoners might outwardly be the greater crime; that of those who are not confined might be just as great a crime from the divine standpoint; for they might be sinning against greater light and ability. No one but God could tell. Therefore, "Judge nothing before the time."—1 Cor. 4:5.

When is "the time"? People are always glad to get the chance to judge others. Someone may ask, "When may we have the chance to judge? We would like to have it now." We reply, "Yours is the wrong spirit. Get rid of it or you will never be a judge at all. God is selecting another class to be judges—a saintly class that will be fully satisfied to judge nothing before the time, but to leave everything to him. He says, "This is the kind I want. I will select them." The Apostle says, "Know ye not that the saints shall judge the world?"—1 Cor. 6:2.

We shall judge the world, not now, under present conditions, but after we shall have been changed in the first resurrection, changed in a moment. The Apostle explains what that change will mean to us—"Sown in weakness, raised in power; sown in dishonor, raised in glory; sown an animal body, raised a spirit body." (1 Cor. 15:42-44) When we reach that condition of bodily likeness, as well as character-likeness to our Lord, we shall be his associates, his wife, the royal priesthood. Then there will be plenty of time for us to judge the world. All the lessons we get now will only develop us for that time. All the experiences we have with ourselves—you judging yourself and I myself—the better we shall be prepared for the opportunity which God will give us by and by.

A JUDGE MUST POSSESS PERFECT SELF-CONTROL

Whoever has not learned to rule his own spirit, is in no condition to rule others. Whoever has not learned to judge his own heart motives and has not put a restraint on them to the best of his ability, is not prepared to sit in judgment upon another. Those who are now being selected of the Lord are not by nature free from imperfections, but have many of the same weaknesses that others have.

Nevertheless, they are seeking to judge themselves to be transformed by the renewing of their minds, to get self-control, or as the Bible says, to "overcome." All those who will be with the Lord in kingdom glory and power and the work of the Millennial age will be "more than conquerors through him that loved us" and bought us with his own "precious blood."—Rom. 8:37; 1 Pet. 1:18, 19.

Various qualities of murder, lust, covetousness, etc., are more or less seen in the unbalanced mental and moral conditions resulting from the fall. We see how this is operating in the whole world. Some are so mentally unbalanced they are put into asylums. Some are so morally unbalanced they are not permitted to be at large, but must of necessity be put into prison. Others are able to be about in the world and have their liberty, but they are not sound of mind. "There is none righteous; no, not one" (Rom. 3:10), is the Bible declaration.

Since we have learned to appreciate the Bible teaching, to see that a great fall came upon our race six thousand years ago, and that all are born in sin and "shapen in iniquity and in sin did our mothers conceive us" (Psa. 51:5), it gives us a great deal of sympathy for many poor people; and as we have more strength of character, mentally and morally, than some of them, we thank God and say, "Who hath made thee to differ?"

We were, perhaps, born differently from many; and what we did not get by heredity, we got through grace; so our strength of character is not of ourselves. It is all by God's grace that we are better than others; and it is not for us to glory, but to give thanks. So we have sympathy for murderers, thieves and vagabonds in general; and we believe the Lord has.

This does not mean that we have the kind of sympathy which would say, "Open wide the prison doors and let every one out!" No, no! Some who have received the truth while in prison have asked us to intercede in their behalf, that they might be released; and we have answered that we were not sure but that they were better where there are; for in prison there is less temptation than in the world. Liberty is a good thing; but it brings a responsibility and additional trials as well.

SIN AND DEATH ARE HEREDITARY

As we consider the weakness and sinfulness of humanity, the question naturally arises, "Why is this so?" The Scriptures, not the Evolution theory, give us a satisfactory answer to the question.

When God placed our first parents in the Garden of Eden, he made this proposition to them: "If you do right, as I command, you may continue to live; but if you do wrong, contrary to my command, you shall die." Our first parents disregarded the divine command and were disobedient. God immediately sentenced them to death. Death was the penalty of disobedience. In other words, God said, "If you are a sinner I will not permit you to live. Those to whom I wish to grant eternal life are those who will gladly obey my law." For, as Jesus said, true worshippers will "worship the Father in spirit and in truth; for the Father seeketh such to worship him."—John 4:23.

But in addition to having the death sentence passed upon him—whether that death come sooner or later—Father Adam received other punishment, aside from that penalty. Ejected from the Garden of Eden, he was brought into contact with thorns and thistles; he labored with sweat of face; he had the sorrows and troubles that come with the decaying body. All these things were the result of sin.

But so far as God was concerned, the penalty of sin was the death sentence merely. In effect God had said, "You are not fit to live; you are not fit for everlasting life; you shall not have everlasting life." But through the sacrifice of his human nature, Jesus, by the grace of God, has tasted death for the whole world of mankind—Adam and all his children, all of whom will ultimately be redeemed from God's sentence. They will be redeemed from death in order that Jesus may, during his Messianic reign of one thousand years, lift them up out of sin and degradation.

THE TRANSGRESSOR MAKES HIS OWN WAY HARD

But do you ever think to what extent man degrades himself? To that extent he will be more degraded than is necessary; and whenever the time comes for his uplifting, the lower he is, the more difficulty there will be in getting him up again. Since God's arrangement for lifting mankind out of the death condition is that he must help himself, each man must labor to rise from his degradation, and must be assisted in his labor. But by his own efforts he must get out of the difficulty. No man will get out by saying, "I would rather be out of this and have life." The way back to perfection will be an up-hill way. It will not be the narrow way of the present time—darkness on every hand, a strait gate, etc.—but a highway, an upward way, something favorable to the person going up. He cannot roll up. He will not be required to put forth so much effort in a month or in a year or in ten years, as we have to put forth, but he will have a good share of the thousand years of Christ's reign in which he can gradually rise up out of his imperfection.

We, on the contrary, are required to turn from sin to righteousness and to make a full sacrifice of ourselves to the Lord. Then we must walk in the Narrow Way to the best of our ability. In this we have the Master to help us; but ours is a short, sharp period of fiery trial; and if our trial is hard, we have the assurance that there is a great reward to those who come off victorious in this battle against self and sin.

In a word, then, when people die, that is the end of things, in one sense of the word, and not an end in another sense of the word. When a man is dead he has come under the full sentence of the law, for the law said, "Thou shalt die."

THE WORLD'S HOPE IS THE RESURRECTION

A junk heap represents the condition of humanity, as well as it can be represented. Some people will go to a junk pile and find a great deal of value there; they can do something with this, that and the other thing. Our Lord is the greatest restorer ever known. When his kingdom is set up, he will take over the world of mankind, approximately 20,000,000,000 of humanity—Adam and his children, all in their broken, fallen condition; and then the great work of refreshing and restoring will begin. The sawing, the hammering and the filing, if you please, will continue during the whole thousand years of the Millennial reign.

So, you see, the condition into which a man gets himself now has a great deal to do with his future. Many will be so degraded that when they come forth from the tomb they will have a very difficult time. Some of these are mentioned in the Scriptures. We are told that some of these will come forth to shame and lasting contempt. There are many people who will come forth to shame. After they had died, many have been found to have been defaulters; many people have been found to have indulged in very criminal acts; yet perhaps no one knew it while they lived. These things came out after their death, and some things may not have come out yet; but we may be very sure that when the Lord's time shall come for the general opening up, there is nothing hidden that will not be disclosed. Therefore, keep your records as clear as possible. Whatever is there will surely be made manifest, is the Lord's declaration of the matter.

When the world's history shall all be known, some that we have thought to be very honest, just people, we may find to have been just the reverse; and others who may have been thought to be dishonest may be found to have been very honest. The judgment of the world is not always right. This is one reason why the Lord warns his people not to judge at the present time. We are not competent now. The Lord will judge in the future. When that time comes and the whole world of mankind are brought forth to have their trial before the "Great White Throne," the books will be opened. Then some will have shame, and some will have great contempt, which will last just as long as they are contemptible. How long will they be contemptible? Just as long as they remain in the wrong state of mind. But if they will obey the terms and regulations of the Messianic kingdom they will rise daily out of their degradation and meanness, coming back more and more to the perfect likeness of God in the flesh, as represented in Adam.

As mankind rise from their fallen condition, so this contempt will pass away. At that time people will perhaps say, "Well, you know he was a very wicked man in his time. He suffered contempt when it was first realized what a degraded character he was." Or, "She was a wicked woman, but now see what a change has come over her! See how well she has gotten along! See what effort she is putting forth! See what character she is developing!" And all will rejoice to see the change.

By the end of the Millennial age, one who was in shame and contempt at the beginning will, if he has taken the right course, have been lifted up above it. We see the principle illustrated in the Scriptures. Saul of Tarsus was in shame and contempt because he was a murderer and blasphemer. But we do not hold him in contempt. Neither do we hold St. Peter in contempt because he denied the Lord. At that time it will be said of the world just as we say of the Apostles when we see what wonderful characters they were afterwards. When the world shall have been brought to a knowledge of God and his righteousness under the favorable condition of the kingdom, restitution will take out of them all imperfections and give them all the good qualities that God originally gave to the perfect man, when God said that he was "very good."

WHO MAY ENTER THE KINGDOM

But do not the Scriptures say that no murderer shall enter the kingdom of God? Yes. The Scriptures state that murderers will not be in the kingdom, that they will be outside—have no part in it—"without are murderers," etc. (Rev. 22:14, 15) This statement does not signify that a man who has once been a murderer might not reform and become a saint and an heir of the kingdom. We have already referred to one murderer mentioned in the Scriptures, guilty of the murder of St. Stephen, Saul of Tarsus, who afterwards became one of the most notable Apostles. He was a murderer, the responsibility of Stephen's death lay at his feet. He was a member of the Sanhedrin and approved of the stoning of Stephen, without which approval the latter could not have been stoned.

So when we read that no drunkard or murderer or robber shall enter the kingdom, the New Jerusalem, how shall we understand it? In this way; that when during the Millennial kingdom all mankind shall have the opportunity of coming into harmony with God, those who maintain a sympathy or love for unrighteousness of any kind will not have divine approval. They will not be permitted to enter within the gate of the city, which symbolically represents the kingdom and the divine favor. Originally, Jerusalem represented the church. "I will show thee the bride, the Lamb's wife"; and "the wall of the city had twelve foundations [foundation stones], and in them the names of the twelve Apostles of the Lamb." (Rev. 21:9-14) But into that city there would be brought the good only.

So all the world of mankind who will come into harmony with God will come into that city, into the New Jerusalem and kingdom of God, and outside of that city will be found all impure characters. We have them pictured in this statement, that liars and murderers, etc., shall have their portion in the "lake which burneth with fire and brimstone." This "lake of fire and brimstone" is as symbolical as is the city. As the city is not a literal city of gold, neither is the lake a literal lake of fire and brimstone. That city was pictured by Jerusalem, and the "fire" by Gehenna. As the offal of the literal city of Jerusalem was put into the Valley of Hinnom for destruction and for the purification of the city, so all the offal of the Millennial kingdom will be destroyed and be kept outside of the Golden Jerusalem. That will be a glorious kingdom, free from anything that would be a blight or blemish or sin; and all who love unrighteousness, in any sense of the word, will be destroyed in "the lake of fire," which is, we are told by the Revelator, the second death.—Rev. 21:8.

"YE ARE THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD"

"Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven."—Matt. 5:16.

We notice that our Lord's statement in this text draws a particularly sharp line of demarcation between the church and the world. He is not their Father, but our Father; it is not their light, but our light. The Lord was addressing the Apostles in particular and all the "overcomers" of that time. But he gives us elsewhere to understand that we who believe the testimony of the apostles are counted in as the same class, so that these words are applicable to us also today. This statement implies that the class which the Lord acknowledges as his disciples have some special light that marks them out as lightbearers. This light that has come to us is the illumination referred to by the Apostle Paul in other places. This illumination that we have received is the light of the holy Spirit.

One does not receive this light when he says, "I will lie no more; I will cheat no more; I will blaspheme no more." If anyone were in a state of alienation from God it would be very proper for him to turn from these sins. But turning from sin would not make one a child of God. We know a great mistake is generally made in the world by thinking thus. There is only one way of coming into this relationship of sons, and that is the way that the Scriptures set forth—faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, full confidence in the divine arrangement of which he is the center, a faith which works, a faith which would lead us to the point of full consecration—baptism into his will. It is the strait gate and narrow way.

THE LIGHT IS THE HOLY SPIRIT

No one is in the family of the Lord at the present time unless this person has entered through the strait gate into the narrow way. Such begin to be marked by the holy Spirit, which illuminates their hearts and minds, giving them a clearer light on things in harmony with righteousness. This illumination, this light which is in us, the Lord says we should be careful lest we lose it. If that light should go out, we would be in greater darkness than we were before.

In another place it is written, "Quench not the Spirit." (1 Thess. 5:19) It could be extinguished entirely. We are, there-

fore, to keep it as an evidence that we are children of God. And if this light be in us we should not keep it secret, not put it under a bushel. We should not say, "We know not the Man" —we know not Jesus. For if any one is ashamed of him, he will withdraw the light from such a one. One who is ashamed of him and his cause is ashamed of everything that is right. Such have no right to be in the church; for the church are to be the body of Christ and joint-heirs in the kingdom of glory and in the work of judging and uplifting mankind.

So, then, we must not be ashamed and hide our light from the masses of men. We have a new illumination. We are to set our light upon a candlestick that all within the house—our own family, our own household, our neighbors—may see it burning; that they may all know that we have a light upon the character and plan of God; that we see the difference between sin and righteousness, justice and injustice.

Whoever holds up a light must of necessity confess the light he is holding. Of some our Lord said that they confess with their mouths, but deny in their lives. We are to let our light so shine that it will bring honor to the Father's name. This means that our whole lives are to be in conformity with the professions we are making, so that others will see and say, "Well, that man believes what he preaches. It is good that such a person lives in our neighborhood." They may not always prefer us for companions, for wherever the children of the light go, it has a reproving influence.

Let us not be surprised, then, if when our neighbors have a reception and entertainment they say, "We will omit their names, for we shall have some wine and some good times, and we do not want them in." We are not to expect the world to love us. We are not to marvel if it goes to the other extreme. Yet not all of the world will hate us. Some will criticize and find fault; others will notice a consistency and say, "It looks to me as though this is genuine."

We are living epistles, "known and read of all men." (2 Cor. 3:2) The light is conspicuous because the darkness is general. We are not to consider this text as being in conflict with that which says we are not to let our left hand know what our right hand does, nor do our good deeds to be seen of men. There is a difference between doing our good deeds to be seen of our neighbors, and in doing them to be seen of our Father. The person who is doing his good deeds to be seen of men will be noticed by people in general, who will say, "Well, I do not believe that he means half he says. He is a hypocrite."

But the person who is living to glorify the Father will not do good to win applause for himself. Whatever he does in the way of charities, or in visiting the sick, etc., he will prefer to do it in an unostentatious manner, making as little show about his good deeds as possible. Consequently, the result will be beneficial to himself and to the person to whom he ministers, for he does these things for the glory of God.

HOW THE WORLD CAN GLORIFY GOD

The latter part of the text says, "and glorify your Father which is in heaven." It was not the Master's expectation that the little light which the disciples would let shine would have a convincing effect upon the world, and that they would all fall down and bow before the Father. Even if the whole world knew about the narrow way, only a few would be willing to undertake to walk in it. Therefore the Lord hides these things from the world, and reveals these secret things respecting the great "high calling" to the meek, to the humble, to those to whom the knowledge would be most advantageous.

How do the world, then, glorify the Father which is in heaven? How would men glorify our Father? We answer that there is a difference between vicious, worldly people and well-meaning worldly people. We are inclined to believe that the majority of mankind, who are in alienation from God and who have no ear to hear the message of the "narrow way," have, nevertheless, an appreciation of righteousness. And if without too much cost they could be righteous, just, generous and all that would be noble, as represented in perfect humanity, they would like to be so. Many of the world have an appreciation of nobility in others. They would like to have it themselves. The difficulty is that the cost of righteousness is more than they are willing to pay.

This class say, "We approve the righteous way, but at the present time it is too difficult. To walk in it would mean the blighting of all our hopes and prospects. We would have to consider whether we could make such transactions as would bring us prosperity. These things are too difficult now. If there was just as much rewards to do right as to do wrong, we would prefer it. We honor God. We honor the principles of righteousness. We see some of the principles of righteousness exemplified in these peculiar people. They are of God. We appreciate these things. Indeed, it is the ideal life. They glorify God. Evidently God is a righteous God; and we hope he will not do too much harm to us. But we cannot let go of the things of this world. Perhaps we may become saints before we die. Who knows?" So they have the idea that they will be neither too saintly, nor too bad!

ST PAUL'S LIGHT SHONE BEFORE RULERS

The influence of light is christianizing, civilizing, uplifting and produces a regard for right, an appreciation of right and wrong, a respect for God. But we are not to think that the building of cathedrals, etc., has had an enlightening influence in the world, nor that the members of these institutions have the light. They admit, themselves, that they are not saints. Only a small number in the world have been saints.

But this minority has had an influence all down through these eighteen hundred years—and it is having an influence today. Look at Jesus and the apostles! See how the light from their lives and conduct has had an enlightening influence upon the world in leading men to honor our Father! Every one of the body of Christ all down the Gospel age has had light, has had influence to some extent and has had something to do with scattering the darkness and inculcating reverence for God.

We see an illustration of this in the Apostle Paul, who was suffering for righteousness' sake. He was before the Roman Governor; and as St. Paul reasoned of righteousness, temperance and the coming judgment, or retribution, Felix trembled. He apprehended; he was convinced. He said, "Here is a man who is living in harmony with these principles of righteousness. The life of this man Paul shows what right is, and that my life is wrong. And if the Lord is to reward right-doing and punish wrong-doing, this Paul will get good things from God. But what shall I get?" So he trembled.

There is a natural dread in mankind because they know that they deserve punishment. The Scriptures tell us that there will be a righteous recompense of reward. St. Paul's words were a great blessing to Felix, for that light which was shining out of Paul's life and words led Felix to see his wrong condition. He might have thought, "It will be altogether right for God to give me some punishment for my sins."

Again, as the Apostle was reasoning before Agrippa and Festus, Agrippa said, "Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian." St. Paul said, "I would to God that, not only thou, but also all that hear me this day, were both almost and altogether such as I am, except these bonds. (Acts 26:28, 29) Having the thought pass before his mind, however, did not make Agrippa a saint. But he had heard the things which led him to appreciate his own fallen condition. He saw that St. Paul was suffering for right-doing and that he was suffering for wrong-doing. He saw that God is a God of justice.

GOSPEL AGE THE CHURCH'S DAY OF VISITATION—THE MILLENNIUM THE WORLD'S

Another Scripture somewhat along the same line reads, "Having your conversation honest among the Gentiles that . . . they may glorify God in the day of visitation." (1 Pet. 2:12) This shows us a distinction between the day of their visitation and the day of our visitation. This Gospel age, the present life, has become the day of our visitation, when in the divine favor it is the time of forgiveness of our sins and of our being brought into relationship with the Father.

No one can have these blessings now except he can exercise faith; otherwise he does not have his day of visitation now. "We who believe" and "enter into rest" are having our "day of visitation." God has come to us now, and has adopted us into his family. And his plan is that if it so be that we are willing to suffer with our Lord, we shall also reign with him in glory. This is our visitation day of honor.

Will the remainder of mankind have a day of visitation and honor? Most assuredly so; they will have opportunity to avail themselves of the redeeming work of our Savior. If their ears are not open now to hear and their eyes to see, the day will come when this will be so; if not now, in the blessed opportunity we have, then it will come by and by. But if we have our day of visitation and neglect these things; if after having put our "hand to the plow" and having received of the good Word of God, we look back; and "if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries" of the Lord.—Heb. 10:26, 27.

But those who do not share in this "day of visitation" will have an opportunity of coming into harmony with God later. If they cannot be reached by the gentle methods mentioned and the visitation by which God is calling out the special class now, they will have an opportunity in the next age, when judgment will be laid to the line and righteousness to the plummet; when all the righteous recompense of reward will be brought to bear, to give each one according to his course.

JESUS' SOUL RESURRECTED

1 Corinthians 15:1-11.—April 7.

Text:—*"This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we are all witnesses."*—Acts 2:32.

Today's study leaves the words and works of Jesus and, appropriate to the Easter season, we are to consider our Lord's resurrection. At the very outset we are confronted with certain errors which have gradually crystallized around the central truths of God's Word. One of these errors is the supposition that the resurrection of the dead, which the Scriptures hold forth as the hope of the church and of the world, is to be a resurrection of the bodies which go down into death.

This mistake has given ground for Infidelity to sneer at this precious doctrine of the Bible. We are asked, How could the dust which once constituted the bodies of thousands of millions of humanity ever be re-collected and rearranged so that we could say that those bodies were resurrected? The infidel urges that many of humanity have been eaten by fishes and animals, and many other corpses have been absorbed by vegetation, which in turn has been eaten time and again by man and beast, entering into the many organisms. The proposition is manifestly unanswerable, yet it does not refute the Bible teaching of the resurrection, but merely our creedal misapprehensions of the Bible teaching. What the Bible does teach is that the real man is the soul, the being, and that he persists while gradually his body keeps changing—sloughing off.

Scientists estimate that the human body undergoes a complete change every seven years, so that a man fifty years old will have lost seven different bodies through natural wastes. None of those bodies was the man himself, for he is the soul, the intelligent personality, which used those different bodies. According to the Bible, the process of rejuvenation would have continued everlastingly had man by obedience continued in divine favor and in the enjoyment of the everlasting life promised. It was sin, therefore, that brought the death penalty—the death of the soul. It was Adam's soul that sinned, it was Adam's soul that died. "In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die"; "The soul that sinneth, it shall die."

The result of this divine sentence upon man would have been extinction——he would have been on the same plane of the brute, without a provision for eternal life, had not God in great mercy provided a redemption—that Jesus Christ by the grace of God should taste death for every man. The death which Jesus experienced was exactly the same kind as the one which destroyed Adam—the soul of Jesus died, as the ransom price for the soul of Adam (including Adam's posterity). Thus we read of Jesus, "He poured out his soul unto death"; "he made his soul and offering for sin."

It is by virtue of this corresponding price which Jesus paid that ultimately Adam and all of his posterity, every soul of man, will be granted a release from the death penalty—a resurrection from the dead. It will be a resurrection, not of the dead bodies, but of the dead souls. In the resurrection God will give each soul a body as it has pleased him.—1 Cor. 15:38.

The few during this age who have become followers of Jesus, begotten of the holy Spirit, will be granted spirit bodies like to the Savior's. The remainder of mankind, not having been begotten of the holy Spirit, will in the resurrection be granted human bodies, the same as they previously had; and their raising up will bring them eventually to all the perfection of the first Adam, unless they refuse the grace of God, in which event they will die the second death, from which there is to be no resurrection.

It is because God has provided for such a resurrection of the souls of men that the Scriptures speak of humanity as not being dead in the same sense that the brute beasts are dead—actually. On the contrary, they speak of the souls of men as being asleep—awaiting the resurrection, when they shall be quickened to life, in conjunction with the bodies which God will supply at that time—earthly bodies to mankind in general, heavenly bodies for the saintly few who will receive the kingdom.

St. Peter on the Day of Pentecost declared that the holy Spirit then bestowed came as a result of our Redeemer's death and resurrection and ascension on high. It proved that he had appeared in heaven on behalf of those who desired to be his followers, his bride class. St. Peter argues backwards to prove that while the sacrifice of Jesus, finished at Calvary, was to pay for divine reconciliation, nevertheless there could have been no reconciliation if Jesus had remained dead. Hence he laid stress upon the fact of his resurrection, and he reminds us that this was foretold. The Prophet David declared, "Thou wilt not leave my soul in sheol, nor suffer thine Holy One to see corruption."—Acts 2:27.

St. Peter's quotation of this, in the Greek, substitutes the word hades for sheol, showing that the two words have the same meaning—the tomb, the state of the dead. St. Peter points out that the Prophet could not have used the word respecting himself, because his soul was left in hades, and his flesh did see corruption. St. Peter said, "David has not ascended into heaven, and his sepulcher is with us to this day." (Acts 2:34, 29) He proceeds to point out that the words were a prophecy of the resurrection of Jesus, that his soul, poured out in death as the redemption price for Adam's soul and for the race. was not left in death, in sheol, in hades, but he was raised from the dead.

St. Paul tells us that "he was put to death in flesh, but quickened in spirit." He declared that Jesus, in his resurrection, was exalted to a higher than human nature. to a higher than the angelic nature—far above angels and principalities and powers—the divine nature.

OUR DIFFICULTY SOLVED

Many have supposed that the fact that our Lord appeared as a man to his disciples after his resurrection proves that he is still a human being, "a little lower than the angels." This is a great mistake. He was the church's forerunner, and St. Paul explains the church's resurrection, saying, "It is sown in weakness, it is raised in power; it is sown an animal body, raised a spirit body." Hence the resurrection of Jesus must have been as a spirit being. Again we read, "Now the Lord is that Spirit."—2 Cor. 3:17.

In considering the Lord's eight appearances to his faithful ones after his resurrection, we should remember that he had two purposes to serve: (1) He wished them to know that he was no longer dead. (2) He also wished them to know that, resurrected, he was a spirit being of the highest order, with all the privileges and powers that spirit beings like the angels exercise. As angels could materialize and appear in the flesh and then disappear, and had done so in the past, so did Jesus. In order that they might not misunderstand he appeared in different forms; on two of the occasions, in forms representing the crucified one; on the six other occasions, in various forms, as the gardener, the sojourner, etc.

In the last verse of our study the Apostle sums up the essence of his preaching, saying, "So we preach and so ye believe." This, in the first verse of our study, St. Paul calls the Gospel; and the word "Gospel" signifies "good tidings," which St. Paul and the other apostles preached, namely, that God, in his own due time, four thousand years after sin had entered the world, had provided a Redeemer, who had died a ransom price for the man Adam. The Redeemer had risen that he might, as Jehovah's Anointed One, the Messiah, confer upon the human race the blessed opportunity for restitution to all that was lost in Adam, and redeemed at Calvary.

But before this could be accomplished, the church, the bride class, must be selected from amongst mankind, to be the second Adam's bride, on the same plane of glory as the second Adam, for the regeneration of all the willing and obedient to human perfection—all that was lost.

LOVE OF THE BRETHREN A CRUCIAL TEST

"Behold, how good and pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity."—Psa. 133:1.

Psalm 133 is evidently prophetic and seems to refer to the brethren in "the church, which is the body of Christ." This thought is implied in the second verse, which says, "It is like the precious ointment upon the head, that ran down upon the beard, even Aaron's beard, that went down to the skirts of his garments," which is a picture of the holy Spirit running down over the body of Christ, the church.

The Psalm seems to be specially applicable to our day, although it has always been a pleasant sight to see brethren dwelling together in unity. In times of persecution there would be greater unity, because there would be fewer likely to attach themselves to the church; outside persecutions would be likely to deter all but the truly consecrated. Such persecutions all would be likely to feel, and only those who had common interest and common cause would be drawn together.

But as persecution would cease and as more would come into the church, who were not so zealous, the opportunities for differences would seem to increase. Although today there is much opposition to the children of light, there is apparently, little persecution. The truth has attracted a number, some of whom,

probably, are not all that they should be. In fact, none of them are what they desire to be—copies of God's dear Son; but each and all should be striving to attain to the standard.

CAUSES OF FRICTION INCREASING

It might at first seem strange that there would be any friction between these favored children of God. One would suppose that their hearts would be so filled with the holy Spirit that there would be no room for the weeds of hatred, envy, strife, jealousy, and that these would be crowded out by the fruits of the Spirit. Perhaps such was the condition when we first made our consecration; and there was no room for these works of the flesh. But it seems that the causes of friction are increasing rather than diminishing. It is proper, therefore, that we should note the source of the difficulty and thus be enabled to ward off the danger and to be peacemakers amongst the brethren. "Ye that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak." (Rom. 15:1) If this standard be the measure, there are not so many strong as we might have hoped; therefore, it behooves each of us to become strong and helpful to the weak brethren in the church.

One thing to be considered is that there is more opportunity for friction amongst those who are spirit-begotten new creatures than there is amongst the world, as a whole; that is to say, a company of people in the nominal church would find it easier to live together in unity and peace than would a company of people more thoroughly enlightened, energized by the truth. This statement might seem strange at first, but becomes more apparent as we examine. In the nominal church religion is more a matter of form. With nominal Christians it is customary to dress up and attend meetings, to sit quietly and then to return home. Pleasant things are noticed, as, for instance, the sunshine, the flowers, the bonnets. Thus the day passes. But with those more enlightened there is a greater activity of mind, of thought. We, too, love the flowers, and all things provided for us by our Heavenly Father. We discuss these—and there is much opportunity for discussion; for as no two persons look exactly alike, so no two persons think exactly alike.

Some of the Lord's people boast that they do their own thinking. But the wisest course is for us to do our own believing. Some subjects are matters of inference and not of knowledge. We are taught of God. He tells us thus and so in his Word, and, if we accept these propositions as they come from the Lord, we can do so without too much discussion. It is pleasant, of course, for us to philosophize on the teachings of God's Word; it is our privilege to believe that which the Lord has stated to us. But whatever philosophizing we do should be kept in restraint and in harmony with the divine statement. And when we remember that while we are philosophizing each other one is philosophizing also, we see where comes in the doctrinal difficulty.

These different doctrinal matters are drawn from the Scriptures. But as soon as we begin to reason about the things not written, there is danger of conflict. Whoever sticks most closely to the Word of God will thereby not only do himself good, but will also be able to avoid controversy with other brethren and their philosophies. We presume that the Lord would not be averse to our having certain reflections along certain lines. We are, nevertheless, to remember that if we have a thought and present it to the brethren, and it does not seem logical to them, we are not to force it upon them, nor are they to force their views upon us. The difficulty seems to be that there is a tendency in such matters to fight each thought to the finish, to want everybody to agree with us, whereas the proper way is to be content and let the matter rest.

Each brother has a right to his own opinion. We have no right to make our own views tests. The things that are tests are the things given us in the Scriptures; as, for instance, it is a test with us and as to our standing with the brethren that we should believe that Jesus Christ is the Anointed One and the Savior of the world; that we are to be joint-heirs with him and share in his inheritance; that we are bought with a price; that we are to have share with our Lord in the sufferings of this present time and in the glories to follow.

Such plain Scriptural statements are to be the ground of our belief, and not any fanciful interpretations put on them by some others. Some see the more general outlines; some see the details and fail to see the general outline. While those who possess the different casts of mind are to be neither blamed nor praised, yet they must grasp the thought that we are to be willing to suffer for the truth—in our loyalty to God, to the brethren and to the truth in general.

THE TRUTH ATTRACTS STRONG CHARACTERS

We are to remember that these brethren who find it so difficult to dwell together in unity have this difficulty in part because of their real intrinsic worth, or character. There are some people whose characters are like putty; there are others in whom you can make a momentary dent, as in a rubber ball; still others are like diamonds. The class that are diamond-like have attained a firmness of texture, of character. If we put a number of balls of putty, a number of rubber balls and a number of diamonds into a pan and shake them well, the diamonds will scratch everything with which they come in contact, because they are so hard. The Lord is not looking for the rubber ball class now nor for the putty class. In due time the Lord will deal with all classes—the people who are of the putty kind and the people who are of the rubber ball kind. But we know that the truth is appealing now only to the jewel class, the diamond class.

When learning that there is danger of stumbling each other, wounding each other, the knowledge should give us wisdom. We should be appreciative of the fact that these brethren have real characters, and that they are not of the putty kind. Even their differences show character. We should try to appreciate the fact and so to exercise ourselves as not to irritate them. We are to counsel them, and to remember that they, as new creatures, are just as desirous of pleasing the Lord as we are. We must, therefore, have patience with each other. There is one text in the New Testament which declares, "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." (1 John 3:14) The intimation is that some of the brethren would be hard to love, and that, unless we had passed from death unto life, we would be unable to love them.

The truth seems to take hold on the stronger characters rather than on the weaker ones. The former have in their flesh more of the firmness, grittiness and combativeness than have many others, who are too pliable and "wishy-washy" to be acceptable to the Lord as members of the "little flock" of overcomers. Thus we see that the very quality which makes us acceptable to the Lord and which is one qualification of the overcoming position, is a serious disadvantage in some respects, when a number of these come together as a church.

Even a diamond surrounded by mud would cut nothing, would scratch nothing; but place a dozen diamonds together, and the more you get rid of the mud element the more gritting, scouring and cutting there is likely to be. So it is with the Lord's jewels—the more they come together, the more they get wakened up, the more opportunities there will be for friction, and the greater necessity there will be that all be thoroughly imbedded in and covered with the holy Spirit, which, like oil, is smooth and unctuous and tends to prevent friction.

WHICH DAY IS SABBATH?

Mark 2:23-3:6.—April 14.

Text:—*"The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath."*—Mark 2:27.

That the Bible teaches some important lessons respecting the Sabbath is undisputed, but what that lesson is is much questioned. The fourth commandment of the Decalogue refers to the seventh day and requires its observance as a day of rest, and no more. The Ten Commandments, as a whole, were the basis of the Law Covenant, compulsory upon every Jew. The Jew keeping all of those commandments was promised everlasting life. Failure to keep them all condemned him afresh. There can be no doubt on this point.

However, in our Lord's time, Jewish religionists had become to a considerable degree formalists, and greater stress was laid upon the literal commandments than on their real spirit, their real meaning. Jesus reproved this on several occasions, saying to the Doctors of the Law, "You bind heavy burdens upon the people." For instance, to hunt for a flea on the Sabbath was construed to be a violation of the fourth commandment, a breaking of the Sabbath, for it was claimed that the man was hunting as truly as though it were a buffalo or a lion.

Similarly, as mentioned in this lesson, fault was found with our Lord's disciples because, passing through a wheat field, they rubbed out some of the grains in their hands and ate them. This was construed as a violation of the Sabbath because it was threshing, winnowing, whether the amount was small or great. Jesus did not violate the Sabbath ordinance nor teach men so. He was a Jew and bound to keep the Sabbath law to the full. He did object to such nonsensical misinterpretations as we have mentioned. In this study he shows that the Sabbath was ordained for man, and that it is a mistake to suppose, as some

then and some now seem to suppose, that God made man simply to keep the Sabbath. One day of rest to six of work was intended for man's comfort and protection, and at the same time to symbolize a certain great lesson, which we shall note hereafter.

Jesus, knowing the mental attitude of his hearers in respect to ancient customs, supported his teaching by citing them to what David did—that in an emergency he ate some of the shew bread, unlawful except for the priests, and that doing so he was not punished, not considered blameworthy. Jesus, as the Son of Man, was Lord of the Sabbath, and had a right to explain its true import.

Later Jesus went into the synagogue where there was a man who had a withered hand and they watched him to see if he would heal him on the Sabbath day, that they might accuse him. Addressing them, Jesus said, "Is it lawful to do good on the Sabbath, or to do evil, to save life or to kill?" They made no answer. The Savior was grieved and angry with a righteous indignation that men should so seriously mistake and misrepresent the divine arrangement as to think it sinful to relieve human distress on the Sabbath. Then he said to the man, "Stretch forth thine hand!" It was healed. But the Pharisees, more zealous for their theory than for the truth, for the letter of the law than for the spirit of the law, were angry and took counsel with the Herodians how Jesus might be destroyed—be killed.

LORD OF THE SABBATH

No commandment was given by Jesus or the Apostles to the church respecting the Sabbath day. The early church evidently did observe the Jewish seventh day in many places, and in some places the first of the week, the anniversary of the Lord's resurrection; and sometimes they observed both of these days. But their observance was not that of law or command, for the Apostle wrote, "Ye are not under law, but under grace." They had the privilege of keeping either or both of those days holy, sacred to the Lord, resting from earthly affairs and giving themselves peculiarly to spiritual matters.

So with us today. We are glad that one day in the week is so generally observed as a day of rest or Sabbath (Sabbath day signifies rest day). We are glad that the day so generally set apart is the first day of the week, because it so beautifully commemorates the Christian's hope, attested by our Lord's resurrection from the dead on that day. And if God's people had two Sabbaths, or seven of them in the week, we believe they would have that much more of blessing.

Indeed, to the Christian, every day is Sabbath, every day should be used as holy to the Lord, and nothing should at any time be done contrary to the divine will or the principles of the divine government. Jesus' declaration that he was Lord of the Sabbath reminds us afresh of St. Paul's declaration that God the Father rested from his work on the seventh day; he left the work entirely for Jesus to do. The seventh day of Jehovah's rest was one of the great days of the creative week, each seven thousand years long. Six of these great days had passed and man's creation was in the end of the sixth.

Having established his human son in Eden as the god or ruler of the earth, Jehovah rested or ceased from his work during the seven day or seventh period of seven thousand years. Six thousand years of this seventh period have already passed and Jehovah God has rested, ceased for his work—He has not interfered to assist man or lift him out of sin and degradation. Another thousand years of the seven remains, but God will not personally engage in man's rescue even then. Why not? Because it is a part of the divine program to leave fallen man and his rescue entirely in the hands of Jesus. He is Lord of this great seventh day.

MAN'S SEVENTH DAY

This entire period of seven thousand years which constitutes the great seventh day or Sabbath, with God, is divided with man into seven great days of a thousand years each, in six of which he has been under a reign of sin and death, toil and suffering; but the seventh, or Sabbath of a thousand years, has been appointed for his rescue and uplifting and blessing. In that glorious seventh thousand-year period Jesus is to be Lord. It will be the great antitypical Sabbath, and the great antitypical Jubilee for mankind. The six days of toil will terminate in the great Sabbath of Messiah's glorious reign and the blessing of all the families of the earth.

THE CHURCH'S SABBATH DAY

St. Paul clearly intimates that to the church, the new creation, every day is a Sabbath day, in the sense that God's consecrated people rest as God rests, in faith, in hope, in trust that Jesus will eventually deliver the groaning creation and bring them into a glorious Sabbath, rest. St. Paul says, "We who believe do enter into rest." Literally, we who believe have a perpetual Sabbath. Seven days in the week, and fifty-two weeks in the year our hearts rest in the Lord and take comfort in the glorious promises of his Word through faith. Thus we rest from feelings of responsibility and worry on account of the world's salvation in exactly the same way that the heavenly Father rests.

We, like the heavenly Father, have the fullest confidence that the Redeemer will yet accomplish the blessing of all the families of the earth, and bring all the willing and obedient into the great rest time of the future—the thousand years of the Messianic kingdom, in which the world will be released from the slavery of Satan, sin and death—in which the groaning creation "will be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the sons of God"—so many as are willing and obedient.

But while the church is thus resting by faith and now enjoy a Sabbath, even though, according to the flesh, we are passing through tribulation hoping to attain a share in Messiah's kingdom, the Apostle points out that "There remaineth a rest for the people of God"—still a different one from that which we now enjoy. The actual rest or Sabbath will be not merely that of faith and rest of heart, it will include also a rest from all labor, while our works will follow with us. In other words, the resurrection change will bring us full relief from the trials, the toils of the way, and usher us fully into the glorious blessings of the resurrection state.

WHY MEN FEAR THE SECOND COMING OF CHRIST

All men realize that they come short of perfection. Additionally, nearly all realize that in the past of their lives lie crimes more or less serious. In the majority of minds fear is instinctive. Under proper limitations it is a healthy condition. "Let us fear lest a promise being left us of entering into his [divine] rest, any of you should seem to come short of it." The fear [reverence] of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom."—Heb. 4:1; Psa. 111:10.

But the adversary has taken advantage of this proper and wholesome fear through what the Apostle terms "doctrines of devils." Thus from infancy an abnormal, irrational fear has obtained a lodgment in nearly every mind, heathen and civilized. Of this fear the Lord, through the Prophet, says "Their fear toward me is taught by the precepts of men." (Isa. 29:13) These "precepts of men," or human traditions, have grossly misrepresented God and his Word; and alas! many, even Bible students, are seriously handicapped by these devilish theories established in a period of ignorance and superstition, but supposed to be based upon the divine Word.

THE TIME OF RESTITUTION IS THE DAY OF JUDGMENT

Amongst other false theories respecting the second coming of Christ we have the view held by our Adventist brethren, that the moment of the Lord's coming will be the "crack of doom" to the world and the inhabitants thereof—marking the end of hope for all not previously brought into relationship with God through Christ, as saints. And Adventists are not alone in this theory. Practically the creeds of all denominations teach the same thought, which is the reverse of Scripture presentation.

St. Peter describes the time of the second advent and the blessings that will then come to mankind. He says, "Times of refreshing [greenness—springtime] shall come from the presence of the Lord; and he shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you, whom the heaven must receive [retain], until the times of restitution of all things which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began."—Acts 3:19-21.

The Scriptures teach that Christ Jesus and his glorified church will together "judge the world." (Acts 17:31; 1 Cor. 6:2) The judging of the world is commonly supposed to signify a condemning, or damning of the world. The real thought, however, is that having condemned the whole world through one man's disobedience, God has arranged that the entire race of Adam shall have a full, fair, personal trial for life or death everlasting, as a result of the redemption accomplished by our Lord Jesus. If God had shown no mercy, there would have been no redemption and no future judgment. The trial of Adam six thousand years ago had its result and its penalty, under which sin and death have reigned for six thousand years.

Having provided the Redeemer, God is about to establish the Messianic kingdom for the very purpose of giving to all humanity a special, personal opportunity for reformation, uplift, sanc-

tification and the attainment thus of life everlasting. Only the preliminary steps of this great plan have yet been taken:

(1) The Redeemer has died, the just for the unjust.—1 Pet. 3:18.

(2) He has appeared in the presence of God for us, the church, and thus, as our Advocate, has made it possible for us to become his bride, or, under another figure, "members of his body."—Heb. 9:24; 2 Cor. 11:2; 1 Cor. 12:12.

(3) This offer, or opportunity for the church, has separated from the world all those who accept this high calling. They become Spirit-begotten children of God and, prospectively, joint-heirs with Jesus. They now share with the Redeemer in sacrificing the earthly life and, if faithful, will by and by be granted a share with him in the glorious work of his kingdom—the judging of the world—the giving of the world a fair, impartial trial for life everlasting or death everlasting.—Rom. 8:17.

"WHO SHALL STAND WHEN HE APPEARETH?"

However, there is another side to this question. The Scriptures indicate that at his second coming only the saintly ones will be ready to receive the Master with joy; that at that time the masses of mankind will be so associated with sin and injustice that, instead of being worthy of his approval, their course in life will come under reprobation and stripes. Hence, it is written, "Go to now, ye rich men, weep and howl for your miseries that shall come upon you"; "Woe unto you that are full now."—Jas. 5:1; Luke 6:25.

Babylon the Great is to fall; and the wonderful institutions of civilization, which are partly good and partly bad, will be found only partly satisfactory to the new King and the rulers of his government. This will mean that many who are now stewards of wealth, influence, position, honor of men, etc., will be called to account and dispossessed of their stewardship. Their realization of their losses is figuratively represented in the Scriptures as wailing and howling and misery, as that class will suffer the loss of practically all upon which they are now setting their affections.

We are not saying that the poor are more righteous than the rich, but this class are more numerous; and those who have little of this world's goods and who are used to trials and scarcity will probably feel less the great time of trouble impending than will some who have long rested in the lap of luxury.

Under various symbolic figures the Bible graphically pictures this day of trouble which is approaching—as a whirlwind, as a fire, as a tempest, as a flood, as a "time of trouble such as never was since there was a nation." That this great day is near, and "hasteth greatly," has been distinctly shown recently and is shown again today in the labor disturbances of Great Britain. There a startled world has been given a glimpse of the fires of passion and anger and resentment which are smouldering beneath the surface and which will shortly envelop the world in a fiery trial, the like of which the past has never known.—Dan. 12:1.

"HE SHALL JUDGE THE WORLD IN RIGHTEOUSNESS"

From this standpoint the apprehensions of mankind are well based in respect to the Great King's disapproval of much that is carried on in the world in the name of civilization, yea, in the Master's own name! But let us not dwell too much upon this side of the question. "Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof." Let us rather point men to the glorious silver lining to that dark cloud which draws daily nearer and nearer. Let us point men to the glorious blessings of Messiah's kingdom, and teach them to pray, "Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done," and to strive to understand and appreciate the principles governing that kingdom; peradventure they may pass through the time of trouble with the less injury.

Hearken to the words of the Prophet (referring not at all to the church, which is accounted worthy to escape those things coming upon the world, but speaking to mankind in general and exhorting the better element of the world), "Seek righteousness, seek meekness; it may be that ye shall be hid in the day of the Lord's anger." (Zeph. 2:3) It surely will be true that the more meek and more righteous men may be the better they will be prepared for the awful shock and terrible distress of that day of trouble, which as a plowshare will prepare the hearts of mankind to receive the good seed—the message of divine truth and grace, which then will be made known to every creature.

BRO. RUSSELL'S SOUTHERN ITINERARY FOR APRIL

Fri.	April 19	Lv.	New York	12:30 a. m.	Penn. R. R.
Sat.	" 20	Ar.	Montgomery	10:40 a. m.	W. of Ala.
"	" 20	Lv.	"	10:05 p. m.	L. & N.
Sun.	" 21	Ar.	New Orleans	7:50 a. m.	"
"	" 21	Lv.	"	9:00 p. m.	"
Mon.	" 22	Ar.	Birmingham	12:10 noon	"
"	" 22	Lv.	"	10:30 p. m.	Frisco
Tue.	" 23	Ar.	Memphis	7:30 a. m.	"
"	" 23	Lv.	"	9:30 a. m.	C. R. I. P.
"	" 23	Ar.	Little Rock	1:30 p. m.	"
Wed.	" 24	Lv.	"	8:45 a. m.	"
"	" 24	Ar.	Memphis	1:05 p. m.	"
Thu.	April 25	Lv.	Memphis	6:00 a. m.	N. C. & St. L.
"	" 25	Ar.	Nashville	1:32 p. m.	"
"	" 25	Lv.	"	9:30 p. m.	Tenn. Cent.
Fri.	" 26	Ar.	Knoxville	6:45 a. m.	Southern
Sat.	" 27	Lv.	"	1:45 p. m.	"
"	" 27	Ar.	Chattanooga	5:55 p. m.	"
Sun.	" 28	Lv.	"	3:00 a. m.	N. C. & St. L.
"	" 28	Ar.	Atlanta	7:10 a. m	"
"	" 28	Lv.	"	9:55 p. m.	S. A. L. (E. Time)
Mon.	" 29	Ar.	Richmond	5:05 p. m.	"
Tue.	" 30	Lv.	"	4:50 a. m	R. F. & P.
"	" 30	Ar.	New York	2:00 p. m.	Penn R. R.

QUESTION RE ATONEMENT

A dear brother asks some questions, the answers to which, we believe, will be helpful, both to himself and to others—either by confirming their understanding of the truth or by correcting misunderstanding. We trust that the answers will be helpful to many of our readers:—

Question.—Would it be right to say that all the merit of our Lord's sacrifice is imputed to each and every individual when Scripturally he becomes a believer?

Answer.—No; the entire merit of our Lord's death was already in the hands of Justice when Jesus ascended up on high, but it was not applied in any degree nor to any person. According to the divine intention that merit is to be applied for Adam's original sin and for all the sins of his children, which are the result directly or indirectly of original sin. Thus we might say that every member of Adam's race has a personal, individual interest or share in that redemptive merit, coming to him by divine arrangement.

Our Lord left the early church with the instruction that they should tarry at Jerusalem for the anointing of the holy Spirit, the evidence of their forgiveness of sins and of their adoption as children of God. He ascended on high and appeared in the presence of the Father—for the entire church of the first-borns. The imputation of his merit was for them all, as well as for the representative few of the Lord's followers who waited for the blessing in the "upper room."

Question.—You have pointed out that no less than the full merit of Christ would be sufficient for the sins of any individual of the human family. How, then, shall we think of sub-dividing this merit amongst these various individuals composing the church of the first-borns and amongst the individuals who will compose the restitution class of the future?

Answer.—The placing of the entire merit of Christ in the hands of Justice guarantees to Justice a full satisfaction for all the Adamic weaknesses of all mankind—even before that merit is specifically appropriated. And since the church was a part of the world, for whom the sacrificial merit is a sufficient price, God could be just in imputing to each one coming in the name and merit of Jesus a sufficiency of his merit to make up for the imperfections and shortcomings; and so of this entire class—"the church of the first-borns." The imputation of this merit to the church as separate and apart from the world engages and obligates that merit for awhile in making good the imperfections of the flesh of the church, so as to permit this class to offer to God a justified, and, therefore, an acceptable sacrifice.

But this is merely imputed or loaned to the church, because the church does not wish to keep the earthly rights of Jesus. The church wishes to sacrifice its all and thus to follow the example of Jesus. And the great High Priest imputes to them enough of his merit to make the church's offering acceptable when offered by the High Priest. When all the church of the first-borns shall have attained to the rewards of the spirit nature, all of the merit of the High Priest, Jesus, will be released, so far as they are concerned—the whole amount will again be free in the hands of Justice, as it was when Jesus ascended.

Question.—Will any of those found worthy of a place in the bride company wear Christ's robe of righteousness?

Answer.—We understand that all who make the consecration do so and are accepted, in one hope of their calling, and that that one hope is the hope of being a member of the bride class and joint-heir with Christ. The fact that there will be a "great company" is a special favor ordained of the Lord in the interest of those who do not prove sufficiently zealous to be counted in with Jesus as "more than conquerors."

The "great company" of Revelation 7:9 is composed of such as fail to come up to the highest standard of sacrifice required of the Lord, but who, nevertheless, will prove not unfaithful in their final test. These are said to have not kept their garments unspotted from the world; hence the requirement that they shall wash them in the blood of the Lamb—prove their loyalty under discipline and stress, having failed to prove it by voluntary obedience unto sacrifice. Thus both the bride and her virgins who follow her all wear the Bridegroom's robe (justification) in the present life. And all in the future life will attain perfection on their own account.

This imputed robe will not be needed by the "great company" after they shall have experienced their "change" to the spirit condition; for they, too, will be changed, in a moment and thereafter possess an individual perfection of their own.

Question.—Will not the church when she shall have passed under the veil have all the merit of Christ in her hand to put on the mercy-seat?

Answer.—No; the church has nothing whatever to do with atoning for sin, even as the under-priests had nothing whatever to do with the presentations of the Day of Atonement blood on the propitiatory.

A correct view of the matter, we believe, is this: The High Priest, Jesus, ascended on high and made imputation of his merit to the church. Those who waited in the "upper room" for the Pentecostal blessing had presented themselves before God, desiring to be accepted of him as sacrifices. They did not sacrifice themselves, they merely presented themselves for sacrifice. Thus we read, "I beseech you, brethren, that you present your bodies living sacrifices." The presentation matter is ours, not the Lord's; the acceptance of the offering as a sacrifice is wholly the Lord's—the High Priest's work. With the acceptance of our flesh as a sacrifice we cease to be as men and thenceforth in the sight of God and of each other we are living members of the Anointed One—the High Priest.

The High Priest accepted the church as a whole through its presentation at Pentecost. And in harmony with the Scriptures we come into this favor or grace, which remains open until the last member of the body of Christ shall be perfected and pass beyond the veil. The work beyond the veil will not be ours as under-priests. It will be the work of the High Priest to sprinkle the blood of the Lord's goat as he sprinkled the blood of the bullock. The figure of the "bride" is to be distinctly eliminated in any thought of sacrifice, and is to be merely associated with the Redeemer and Bridegroom, as joint-heir in his kingdom. The figure of the under-priests is the one which applies to the church in respect to all sacrificial matters.

Question.—Would it be correct to say that the merit of Christ cannot be compared to a garment or robe until after consecration?

Answer.—A robe is a covering. The wedding robe of the parable represents our Lord's merit imputed to his people as a covering for their blemishes or imperfections of the flesh. This robe takes cognizance of the church as the prospective bride who acknowledges the headship of Jesus her Lord. Another figure represents the members of the church as wearing white robes and hoods or bonnets, the illustration of the under-priesthood. In this figure the priests represent the brethren or body members and indicate that they are not independent, but under and subject to the headship of Jesus.

The robe of Christ's righteousness imputed to the church as a covering for her blemishes and to make her acceptable gives place or becomes transformed into a robe of her own righteousness, in the resurrection. As our Lord Jesus is represented as robed in white linen, so the bride is pictured as arrayed in fine linen, "the righteousness of the saints." The imputed robe merely covers our fleshly blemishes and imperfections in the present time.

The new body which God will give us in the resurrection will be perfect of itself and need no imputation of the merit of Jesus. The spirit body of those who will attain to the "first resurrection" will be absolute, complete, perfect, as was the resurrection body of Jesus. The robe of Christ's righteousness, imputed to cover our fleshly imperfections, we will need no more, because we will no longer have the fleshly imperfections.

The new robe is said to be embroidered. And this figure carries with it our endeavors at the present time to develop the character-likeness of Jesus—to perfection, in the spirit. As we read, "It [the new creature, the soul] is sown in weakness, it is raised in power; it is sown in dishonor, raised in glory; it is sown an animal body [needing the imputation of Jesus' merit]; it is raised a spirit body" (in full possession of its own merit.)

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"YE WERE BOUGHT WITH A PRICE"

(1 CORINTHIANS 6:20)

It will be noticed that the Apostle refers, not to the world, but to the church in the statement, "Ye were bought with a price, even the precious blood of Christ." Other Scriptures tell us that "Jesus Christ, by the grace of God, tasted death for every man"—that he redeemed the world. We are to remember, however, that this work of redemption covers centuries. Promises respecting it were made long centuries before Jesus came. He accomplished a certain portion of the work—the all-important part of giving himself a ransom price for all—laying down his life.

But while his life was thus laid down, to be the price of the sins of the world, it has not yet been applied for the world's sins. If it were, then the world would no longer be under divine condemnation, "children of wrath," but would in some sense of the word be back in fellowship with God. The price laid down by the Redeemer at Calvary is eventually to be made applicable to the sins of the whole world, but not yet. It will not be made applicable to the whole world until after the gathering out of the world—of all nations, classes—the bride of Christ, the "elect."

In harmony with this we read that our Lord Jesus after his resurrection ascended up on high, there to appear in the presence of God for us—for the household of faith—not for the world. Hence any blessing, and reconciliation with God, any arrangement of divine favor and everlasting life, is not open to the world, but merely to believers, the "household of faith": "To us who believe he is precious"; "We have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ, the Righteous." Unbelievers have no advocate with the Father, and consequently have no forgiveness of sins, no reconciliation, but are still under the condemnation of death. "We have escaped the condemnation that is on the world."

How fully these different texts of the divine Word dovetail with each other and with the facts! We have peace; the world has no peace. God is our Father; the world is under condemnation, and are "children of wrath," under sentence of death, and not recognized by the Creator in the present time, although the Scriptures show us that he has very gracious plans and arrangements for mankind in general by and by—during the Messianic reign of Jesus and the church, his bride. Then, in this class, the Seed of Abraham (Gal. 3:29), all the families of the earth will be blessed.

THE WORLD IS NOT YET BOUGHT

Would it be right, some one inquires, to say that the world is "bought with a price?" We answer that it would not be strictly right to say, but we need not quarrel with those who fail to state the matter in exactly the proper language. Rather, we might surmise that they are speaking of things that are not yet accomplished as though they were already finished. God assures us that in due time the price which our Lord laid down at Calvary will be made applicable to the world under the gracious terms of the New Covenant which he will make first with Israel. Nevertheless, the point stands out clearly and distinctly that thus far the ransom-price has not yet been applied to any members of Adam's race except the household of faith—believers. All things belong to these. Nothing belongs to the world as yet.

The privilege granted to the church through her great Redeemer and Advocate is that his merit imputed to her permits her to share with him in his sacrifice of the earthly nature, and to become joint-heirs with him in his glorious arrangements of glory, honor and immortality on the divine plane.

When we speak of the church of the first-born we are to remember that the words carry us back to the typical first-borns, who were delivered from death on the occasion of the first typical Passover. There the first-borns of Israel were passed over or spared when other first-borns perished. Sub-

sequently, they were all exchanged for the one tribe of Levi, which thereafter was the tribe of the first-borns, and as such was set apart for divine service in connection with the Tabernacle, and later the Temple. They were not all priests, though this was the priestly tribe. Only a few out of the whole number were selected for the priesthood. So it is with the church of the first-borns; they will all be overcomers, they will all be loyal and faithful to God, but only a "little flock" will be found specially saintly, holy, acceptable unto God through Christ, and these will be the antitypical priests: "Ye are a royal priesthood."—1 Peter 2:9.

Hence James declared (1:18), "Ye are a kind of first-fruits unto God of his creatures." Of course, our Lord Jesus was primarily the first-fruits of all God's creatures. Secondarily, the bride class will be a part of that first-fruit company. Then there will be a large company of saintly people who will come through "great tribulation," "will wash their robes and make them white in the blood of the Lamb," and attain the spirit nature. These also will be a part of the first-fruits of God to the spirit nature—all on the spirit plane. Then will come God's favor to mankind in general—the after fruits of his earthly creation—a great company, gathered during the Millennium. All of the evil doers and corrupters of the earth will be destroyed, but those in full perfection will be a glorious fruitage unto God.

St. Paul writes respecting the resurrection of "every man in his own order"—his own band or company. The first of the earthly nature to experience resurrection—that is, a full resurrection, or raising up completely out of death and imperfection—will be the ancient worthies, but they will not be part of the first-fruits unto God or his creatures, for they will be, with the remainder of mankind, regenerated by the Christ, the Giver of everlasting human life, secured at the cost of his own sacrifice. With all the remainder of humanity, they will come under the terms of the New Covenant. Indeed, they will be the first to be blessed by that New Covenant arrangement. But since the divine programme deals with the world as a whole, Messiah will not deliver up any portion of the world, even those perfected, until the end of the thousand years of his reign of glory and restitution. Consequently the ancient worthies will belong to the "after-fruits"—human fruitage of the divine plan connected with our earth.

At the close of the thousand years, when Messiah shall have completed the work of restitution for all the willing and obedient, and shall destroy in the second death all refusing to make progress toward righteousness, then the Mediator steps out from between God and man and leaves the world exposed to the full demands of divine justice in letter and in spirit. This will not mean their injury, because in perfection humanity is quite capable of being and doing all that divine justice requires. The whole world then being perfect there will be no excuse necessary for any of them, and hence no mediation on behalf of any will thereafter take place.

It will be at that time, after the Mediatorial kingdom shall have passed, and Jesus shall have delivered up the kingdom to the Father (1 Cor. 15:24), that Satan, the personification of evil, will be loosed from his prison-house for a little season—to tempt, to test, to try, to prove all those that dwell upon the face of the whole earth.

In the thousand years of Messiah's kingdom they will be shielded from all outside temptations and will be helped over and forgiven the imperfections of the flesh, while attaining the fleshly perfection. But at the close of the thousand-year period, having attained the perfection of the flesh, and having had large experience with sin and righteousness, good and evil, it is as proper that they should be tested as that Adam was tested in the beginning—tested to see whether or not the lessons, blessings, experiences and opportunities have fully committed them as lovers of righteousness and haters of iniquity. If these have then the trials that will come upon them through the permission of sin and temptation will be met accordingly, with loyalty to God, to the truth and to righteousness. All such will gain the victory over the temptations.

But such as really at heart still love sin will be entrapped and ensnared and manifested. Then the trials or judgments from heaven will destroy them and Satan, that the world may be cleansed of all who love sin, and be enjoyed thereafter only by such as love righteousness and hate iniquity.

True, God knowing the heart, could judge all of those people without any testing by Satan, but many of his creatures, unable to read the heart, might wonder respecting the divine justice which would smite down some of their fellows who outwardly were righteous, and they might consequently be continually in fear and trepidation lest they should thus be smitten down; hence the Almighty has adopted a method of making this temptation open and above board, to be witnessed by angels and men. Thus it was with Adam in his trial, in his sentence, and in the conception of the penalty. Thus it will be at the close of the Mediatorial reign of Christ. Those who then sin wilfully will be the violators of the New Covenant and will die accordingly, just as Adam violated the Covenant under which he was placed, perfect, holy and with the promise of everlasting life.

The fact that this testing of mankind will be after the end of the thousand years of the Mediator's reign, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to the Father, does not prove that the glorified Jesus will have nothing to do with the destruction that will come upon Satan and those obedient to him. Quite to the contrary. As Jesus was the divine Agent, Instrument, Word, Mouthpiece, *Logos*, in all the work of creation, and prior to undertaking the Mediatorial work, so highly exalted now in honor, next to the Father, and at his right hand of power, he will undoubtedly be the Father's Representative in that judgment upon the wilful sinners, who with Satan will be consigned to the second death.

Here the question may arise in the minds of some, What did the Apostle mean when he said in 1 Corinthians 15:25, 26, "He must reign until he hath put all enemies under his his feet; that last enemy that shall be destroyed is death?"

The Apostle is speaking of those things which are against or contrary to mankind—those things which hinder men from keeping divine law, and thus being in full harmony with the Creator. Every such thing is an enemy, and is to be destroyed and be put out of the way—ignorance, superstition, vice, human weaknesses, are some of the enemies of righteousness, and, therefore, enemies to the best interests of humanity. Death is such an enemy, because it is death working in us that causes all our difficulties.

All the imperfections, whether moral or physical, or mental, are the workings of death. Because death is thus working in humanity, therefore the righteously intentioned cannot do the things that they would. The work of Messiah's reign will be to put down, to put away, not only other oppositions, but this opposition of the workings of death. Gradually mankind will be lifted up, up, up, out of all the weaknesses, out of death, to the full perfection of his being. Then death will be destroyed—the Adamic death, which came upon all men through one man's disobedience, and which is to be canceled, done away completely, because of Christ's obedience, even unto death.

Only toward the close of that thousand years of the reign of the great Mediator will this work of completely overthrowing death be accomplished. Then all mankind will have been delivered, not only from the tomb, but from every shade and degree of death—the whole world will be alive in the sense that Adam was alive before death passed upon him, or he was affected by the sting of sin.

Then the kingdom will be turned over to the Father. Those who will die during the thousand years, as wilful evil doers, will die the second death. It is not an enemy of man; it is the righteous sentence of a righteous God in the interest of his creatures—those who wilfully prefer sin shall be destroyed from amongst the people, because their influence will be to corrupt the earth. The second death, therefore, is not included amongst the enemies, and is not the death that Jesus will destroy.

Neither is Satan one of the enemies whom Jesus will then destroy. He was an enemy before man sinned, and his rebellion was not brought about by man's sin. He was subject to divine authority before man was created, and will be a subject of divine authority after man shall have been redeemed and restored. It will not be for the Mediator to deal with him, but for divine justice to determine his deserts. Besides, it is said that he will be destroyed in the second death, in the death from which there will be no redemption, no resurrection.

MOSES AS A MEDIATOR

The Law Covenant instituted at Mount Sinai was not made with Moses, but with the people of Israel, as Moses declared: "And Moses called all Israel, and said unto them, Hear, O Israel, the statutes and judgments which I speak in your ears this day, that ye may learn them and keep and do them. The Lord our God made a covenant with us in Horeb. The Lord made not this covenant with our fathers, but with us, even us, who are all of us alive here this day."—Deut. 5:1-3.

Moses was merely the mouthpiece of that covenant. The word mediator signifies, go-between; as Moses said, 'I stood

between God and you." (Deut. 5:5.) The terms of the covenant and the arrangements of the mediator place the responsibility upon the mediator as the representative of the people, and as the representative of God to the people.

Correspondingly Christ is the Mediator of the New Covenant. He is not yet completed. The Head has finished his work, ascended to glory, and has become the Advocate of those who desire to become members of his body, and for eighteen centuries God has been receiving the members of the body of Christ, the Mediator, into relationship with himself. Soon the last member of the foreknown and foreordained number of the elect will have been called, accepted and found faithful; and then this age will end, because the great Prophet, Priest, King, Judge and Mediator will be complete. And more than this: He will have finished his sacrifice—the sacrifice of the flesh, the merit of which is to go to Israel and the world, under the terms of the New Covenant: "They shall obtain mercy through your mercy."—Romans 11:31.

So it was in the type. Before the Law Covenant was inaugurated, Moses took bulls and goats and slew them and used the blood thereof for the sprinkling of the tables of the law, representing the Almighty and his obligations to the covenant, and then he sprinkled the people, bringing them under the obligations of the covenant. The antitype of this is that immediately after The Christ is glorified beyond the veil, he will apply the merit of his sin-atonement of Calvary for the satisfaction of the whole world, and as the basis of the New Covenant which will be inaugurated with Israel, as promised.—Jeremiah 31:31.

TO THE JEW FIRST IS THE DIVINE ARRANGEMENT

The sprinkling of Israel will come first—"To the Jew first" is the divine arrangement, as the offer of the privilege of becoming members of Spiritual Israel was first offered to the Jews. But it will not cease with them. Many nations will be sprinkled—all who will. The knowledge of the glory of the Lord will fill the whole earth, and many nations shall say, "Come, let us go up to the house of the Lord; he will teach us his way, we will walk in his paths, for the law shall go forth from Mount Zion (the heavenly or spiritual kingdom) and the Word of the Lord from Jerusalem" (the earthly phase of the kingdom, represented by the ancient worthies, whom Messiah will make princes, or rulers, in all the earth).

It will be seen that while it took but a moment to sprinkle the Tables of the Law, it must have taken Moses a considerable time to sprinkle all the people, numbering millions. And, in the antitpye, that work lasts for a thousand years. During the entire thousand years of the reign of Christ upon his mediatorial throne the work of sprinkling the people—the work of justifying them, making them acceptable, cleansing them from sin, and bringing them into relationship with the covenant and its demands of perfect obedience—will be in process. At the close of the thousand years, when all the people shall have been sprinkled—when all who desire to avail themselves of God's gracious arrangement through Christ shall have done so—the Mediatorial kingdom will come to an end; having finished its intended work the disloyal and disobedient will be destroyed in the second death. Thenceforth the New Covenant between God and men will remain a perpetual covenant. Through all eternity it will be true that Jesus was the Mediator of that covenant, but his mediatorial office will not continue.

"STILL BELOVED FOR THE FATHERS' SAKES"

So it was in the cases of Moses: The Law Covenant which he mediated was binding both upon God and Israel for a time whether Moses lived or died. Long after his death it was still spoken of as the Mosaic Law Covenant, and Moses was referred to as the one who mediated that covenant. Since the people could not fulfil the demands of the law, they could not have the everlasting life which it promised, but instead received its curse or condemnation of death. The atonement day, year by year, took knowledge of this fact and typically made satisfaction for their sins of the year and gave the Israelites another year's opportunity in God's favor, to try whether or not they could obey the law and gain everlasting life. But since the Temple has been destroyed, and the Jewish priesthood lost, they have had no further repetition of the atonement day sacrifices for now more than eighteen centuries, and hence, for all this period of time, they are completely cut off from manifestations of divine favor. The Apostle, however, assures us that they "are still beloved for the fathers' sakes," and that in the divine plan a blessing is yet to come to them.

That blessing will come from under the New Covenant, established by the better mediator. All who will accept him and the gracious arrangements of his mediatorial kingdom will attain the highest blessings promised to their nation, and become associated in the kingdom, which for a thousand years will bless all people with the gracious opportunity for returning to divine favor on the same terms—obedience to the extent of ability and faith in the Redeemer.

"Bride and Bridegroom, then appearing,
Shall illuminate earth's gloom;
And the nations will be shouting,
'Lo, our King! make room, make room!'
Oh, the times of glad refreshing,
Soon shall bring a sweet release,
Through the glorious reign of blessing,
Through the mighty Prince of Peace!"

BEWARE OF PRIDE IN THE HEART

"Every one that is proud in heart is an abomination to the Lord."—Prov. 16:5.

Pride is very deceitful and frequently cloaks or covers itself with humility. Because of our own imperfections it is well for us not to become judges of others, but merely limit our judgment to the outward manifestations. The Lord says, "By their fruits ye shall know them." (Matt. 7:20.) We are to judge the outward conduct, but we cannot go beyond and say what is of the heart. Errors of judgment are not an abomination to the Lord. He may look upon mistakes with sympathetic eyes. People are not responsible for those qualities which have come down to them by inheritance. Without judging individuals we may see certain conduct sometimes which may seem to be pride, yet is not pride.

We have seen people who have a great lack of self-esteem, a great lack of vanity, but who may have large approbativeness. They do not think so much of themselves as they wish others to think of them. They say, "If people knew me as I know myself, I would simply be a cypher in the world." There is a certain amount of truth in this. People with small self-esteem are often taken to be proud, when it is really not the case. In trying to look as though they were somebody they will carry themselves as though they thought they were everybody. Such persons are simply laboring in an unfavorable condition in which they were born. We cannot think that the Lord would abominate them. They are very often little to themselves and very humble with the Lord. Yet they try to make themselves appear in as favorable a manner as possible. We must admit that there is a propriety in this to a certain extent. It is wise for them to try to overcome their weaknesses of nature. They should try to think soberly of themselves (that is, to be of sound mind), and they should try not to overdo matters. They must act with meekness, as well as feel and think meekly.

There is another class who have a large amount of self-esteem, yet who think, "I do not wish others to know that I have this high opinion of myself, therefore I will cloak it. I will endeavor to speak very humbly. The Scriptures say that we should be humble, therefore when I speak of anything I will try to speak from this standpoint." Such people very frequently get a gloss of humility of an outward kind. Some people really think that this course is right. If they are sincere in their conduct, we cannot suppose that the Lord would abhor them.

Our thought, then, is that in this text "The proud in heart" are the haughty-minded—those who feel haughty toward others and are not sympathetic, who think of themselves more highly than they ought to think, who despise others. The heart of such a one is not that which God could love or that anyone could love; it is an abomination in the Lord's sight.

WHY PRIDE IS AN ABOMINABLE TRAIT

An abomination is that which is extremely displeasing—that which is repulsive—that which a person should not wish to entertain—should not harbor—must reprove. There must be some reason why God declares himself thus in opposition to pride. We perceive that no one really has anything whereof to be proud. As the Apostle suggests in one place (1 Cor. 4-7), "What hast thou that thou didst not receive? Now, if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory as if thou hadst not received it?" What have we that we have not received of the Lord? If whatever we have received is a gift, where is our right to be proud of it? Evidently, such would be a very wrong condition of mind to be in—to be proud of things not our own, not of ourselves, but a gift.

There is, therefore, no reason for any to be proud; but there is every reason to be thankful to the Great Giver of all good. And that which is true of us is true also of the angels. Hence, there is nothing in all the universe for any of

God's creatures to be proud of. Whatever conditions they are in are not of themselves. God seems to have arranged the conditions for humility, so that there could be no ground for pride.

Pride is merely selfishness, self-laudation; and selfishness is another name for sin. Sin and selfishness, therefore, are in opposition to the divine character and the divine plan—totally in opposition to it. It is, therefore, the right and proper thing that God should have the proud in detestation. Not having used his blessings aright, they could not have his favor. Whether they be proud of mental attainments, proud of physical strength, proud of wealth or ancestry, or proud that their "ancestors were monkeys," matters not. It is all pride, and an abomination to the Lord.

THE MOST DETESTABLE FORM OF PRIDE

But evidently the most detestable form of pride is pride in the church—as though we had made the plan and could boast in it! We do, indeed, see that anyone making the plan might justly feel proud of it. But when we remember that none of us made the plan, but that we are privileged to see it, we should be filled the more with humility, and should try day by day to better glorify his name for the blessings which he has provided for the world.

We cannot suppose that any kind of pride would be more detestable in God's sight than pride of the truth. If anyone should continue in such a course, manifestly it would lead him out of the light. We see this principle illustrated well in the case of Satan. Noble, grand, he allowed pride to enter his heart and said, "I will ascend above the others; I will have an empire of my own." And this pride made him the opponent of God. (Isa 14: 12-17.) He is known in the Scriptures as the adversary, Satan, the devil.

All those who have the spirit of pride fail to recognize that "every good and perfect gift cometh down from the Father of Lights." (Jas. 1:17.) Every such one, therefore, has the spirit of the adversary instead of the Spirit of God. If it be allowed to grow and bring forth fruit, it will lead eventually to the second death. It is appalling to see the nature of the temptations that come to God's people! But we are not to judge their hearts, to determine whether it is a pride of heart or not; for it may be merely a deception for a time. And even though they may miss the "high calling," they must get a place in the "great company." And when we see that the conduct is not at all in accord with what we should expect in those blessed with the truth, it should make us all search our own hearts to see to what extent we have the same traits of pride.—Jas. 3:10.

Perhaps this quality of pride is nowhere more manifested than in some of those who have been in the truth for quite a while. Sometimes it is on the part of the sisters. Sometimes they are very proud of what they know and very domineering in their manner, seeming to think that they know it all. Sometimes it is on the part of the brethren, in whom a spirit of pride appears. They have been placed as elders. They see that they themselves are right and others are wrong. Sometimes this leads to an attempt to override the liberties of the congregation and to hold power in their own hands.

"BE NOT MANY TEACHERS"

It may not always be our privilege to mention such a matter. Such things may be matters that belong to a class. But, as one pilgrim brother remarked some time ago, "Brother Russell, I sometimes think that, when we get beyond the veil, we shall be astonished to find how few of those who have exercised positions of prominence in the church will be amongst the elect." It behooves us all who are associated in the Lord's work to watch ourselves closely, that if we find the slightest tendency in this direction of pride we may stamp it our as we would some contagious disease, knowing what the effects are upon others. We should be sympathetic with those who are beset, but not with the difficulty. We are reminded of the Apostle's words, "Be not many teachers, knowing that we shall receive greater condemnation." Those who have seen the truth clearly and have some talents and opportunities will have the severest trial on that account.

Recently we heard of some trials in the Class Extension work. The opportunities of Class Extension have resulted, in some cases, not advantageously. Some of great self-esteem have felt that they should be in the work, determining that they would tell the class what to do. Some good brethren may have done this; some noble men have done it. But in doing it, they were not acting wisely, we believe.

As we said at first, it is not well for us to judge the heart. Everyone is privileged to preach as he may have opportunity. He may go forth entirely at his own expense and opportunity. He may preach all that he can. Good men have done so. There is nothing in the Scriptures to prohibit it. But to try to coerce a class—trying to recognize the class in some sense and to ignore the class in another sense—is not the right thing. If the class is supposed to express the divine will, the individuals should acquiesce in what the class decides.

THE MORTAL BODY THE SERVANT OF THE NEW MIND

"I keep my body under, and bring it into subjection, lest that by any means . . . I myself should be a castaway."—1 Cor. 9:27.

St. Paul was a most successful soldier of the cross; and from his Epistles we gain much information as to how to fight our weaknesses successfully. In our text the Apostle speaks particularly of himself with the evident intention of teaching a lesson to all of the Lord's people whom he addressed at that time or who would receive his word subsequently—including ourselves. The thought is not that we are to keep each other under, but that a special commission is given to us in respect to our own bodies, and that we ourselves will be held accountable for their conduct. This statement, "I keep my body under," would be true only of one who has been begotten of the holy spirit, and who has become a new creature in Christ Jesus. But although the individual is reckonedly a member of the body of Christ, adopted into God's family, and called a son of God, he has not as yet, of course, received the spirit body promised him, but it awaiting to receive it in the resurrection.

GOOD INTENTIONS NOT SUFFICIENT

Meantime Gods calls upon all spirit-begotten ones to demonstrate their loyalty to righteousness and their faithfulness by practising upon their mortal bodies. When coming into Christ, they made a full consecration of themselves, of their bodies and all that is theirs, to the Lord's service. It was on account of this covenant of sacrifice that they were counted as members of the body of Christ and begotten of the holy Spirit —sons of God. It is not sufficient, however, to declare our intention; but God allows the difficulties and trials of life to prove our faithfulness to the sacrifice we have made. And while making provision for the blemishes of our mortal body, he, nevertheless, holds us responsible for our bodies, for our words and our actions. He calls us to be new creatures; and we must develop our characters to such an extent that the new creature will fight down, to the best of his ability, everything opposed to the new will. The first part of the text declares, "I keep my body under," that is to say, in subordination, under restraint.

Those who deal in horses tell us that all horses must be broken; and that to break a horse is difficult of accomplishment and requires a great deal of force. The object in thus dealing with the horse is not to continue to break the animal every day, but to break him once for all, that he might be put to some service. This illustration seems to fit the Apostle's thought.

As a new creature the Apostle had a mortal body which was rebellious against God's will, and thus must be dealt with in a firm manner, in order to bring it under the control of its master—the new mind, whose Head is Christ. If the body be taught this lesson of submission, it may be a good, useful servant of the new master and serve unto death, just as a horse may be broken in and serve his master well. This is the thought in the Apostle's words, "I keep my body under." In substance the Apostle says, I must break in this human nature, force it into harmony with the new will, and bring it into subjection, making it a servant to myself, the new creature. This I do because this is the divine will and the very thing to which I have been called.

As a new creature I wish to show that I am loyal to the principles of righteousness and truth everywhere. But this old body is more or less in rebellion against God and against the principles of divine arrangement. And it is my duty to see to what extent I can carry out this proposition—the bringing of the old mind into subjection to God and to righteousness. And in proportion as I make myself a servant of righteousness, God will use me, and to that extent I shall grow and become an overcomer. By doing these things an entrance will be administered to me into the everlasting kingdom of Jesus Christ. But if I fail to carry this out, I shall fail of the character-development which all must have who would be accounted members of the body of Christ.

As St. Paul says in another place, God foreordained that he would have a church, and that all who would be of this

church should become copies of his Son, Christ Jesus. (Rom. 8:28-30.) So, if St. Paul would remain a member of this body of Christ, he must keep his human body under, must subordinate his earthly nature, not merely bringing it into subjection to things which would be for righteousness and truth, also bringing it into subjection as regards natural things. So must all do who would come off "more than conquerors" in the good fight; it is necessary that we should carry out this fulness of service; that we should be faithful unto death, and that we should show this consecration, not only in our minds, but also in our mortal bodies.

When the Apostle says here that he would be in danger of being a "castaway" if he did not bring his body into subjection, and thus prove to be an overcomer, it is tantamount to saying that he would fail to make his calling and election sure. He was called to become an heir of God and joint-heir with Jesus Christ. If, therefore, he should fail to perform his part of the contract of sacrifice, he would become a castaway in respect to this election. He would not gain the election. He would lose in the race in which he had started.

HABITS MAKE CHARACTER

It is our duty to watch ourselves that we do no harm, that our body does good service and not injury to ourselves. A man or a woman or a child who goes through the house slamming doors, and merely says, "I was in a hurry and could not help it," is not gentle. He is not a gentleman, or she is not a gentlewoman. Whoever fails to cultivate gentleness is failing to cultivate the fruits of the Spirit. He is losing a glorious opportunity of practising upon himself—of keeping his body under, of getting himself into the way of doing things in a sensible, reasonable manner. The person who bangs doors and goes about noisily is one who does not think of other people and their interests. When we talk about ourselves all the time and think about ourselves all the time, it is an evidence of selfishness. In all these things the Lord expects us to keep our bodies under, and to show carefulness in keeping our bodies under, in the little things of life as well as in the great things.

If our Lord Jesus were here, none of us would expect him to go about noisily, slamming the doors of the house, or to be wasteful. Our Lord was most economical in the two cases where he fed the four thousand and the five thousand. Although there was plenty of food to feed the multitude, he told his disciples to "gather up the fragments that remain, that nothing be lost."—John 6:12.

Thus did God's dear Son view matters; and we desire to be copies of him. In building character we must wilfully and intentionally do right. The person who practises in the little things will also be careful in the larger matters. Even the pins, the needles and the paper we should use carefully. Not that any should be miserly—not willing to give one a pin if he wants one—but do not think to waste even them, "Oh, the pins cost only a trifle anyway." The Lord was always generous, but he was economical. So we should all be. We should keep the body under the new mind. The new mind should be looking out for these matters and keeping the old body in service.

APOSTOLIC SUCCESSION UNSCRIPTURAL

MARK 3:7-19; MATTHEW 5:13-16.—APRIL 21.

TEXT:—*"Ye did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you, that ye should go and bear fruit."*—John 15:16 (R. V.).

Today's lesson shows the particularity with which the twelve Apostles were chosen. Many were the Redeemer's followers at times, both men and women, but only the twelve were specially deputized as his mouthpieces and representatives among men. Some of the things said to and respecting them are equally appropriate to every one of Jesus' followers, but other things said to the twelve and respecting them apply to none others of their day or since—for instance, the Savior said to the twelve, and to none others, "Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven."—Matt. 16:19; 18:18.

The import of these words clearly is that the persons indicated were assured that they would be specially guided of divine providence in all their efforts that they would set forth as the divine will amongst men nothing to which heaven would not assent. And, on the other hand, they would declare not binding upon the followers of Jesus only such things as in God's sight would not be binding. In those twelve men, therefore, we recognize a plenary inspiration, or special guidance not accorded in this particular degree to others of the "brethren."

We do not forget that Judas was one of the original twelve and that, proving traitorous, "He went to his own place." We remember also that he was specially referred to by the Prophet David, through whom the Divine message came, that another would take the apostleship which Judas forfeited. What we do claim is this: that the announcement was prophetically made of a successor to Judas, so as to teach us that the appointment of his successor was exceptional and not the rule; that aside from this one case there would be no successors.

Surely there is no intimation in the New Testament that as one after another of the apostles died other men were recognized as succeeding them. On the contrary, the Scriptures repeatedly refer to the "twelve apostles of the Lamb." Moreover, as the Jewish dispensation began at the death of Jacob, in the recognition of his twelve sons, so the Christian dispensation began at the death of Jesus, in recognition of his twelve apostles. And as one of the tribes of Israel was cut off, and is not mentioned in the enumeration of the Apocalypse, but the tribe of Manasseh substituted, so amongst Jesus' apostles Judas is dropped and a successor appointed.

ST. PAUL TO SUCCEED JUDAS

In the past we may have read too carelessly the account of how the eleven faithful Apostles exceeded their authority in the selection of Matthias to take the place of Judas. It was proper enough that they should scan the prophecies, and that they should note, as they did, God's declaration of the unfaithfulness of Judas, and that another was to take his special place in the church; but they should have remembered that they had not as yet qualified as Apostles themselves. They should have remembered that whatever Apostolic or special power they exercised during Jesus' ministry came to them from him and not from the Heavenly Father—that Jesus endued them as his representatives. They should have remembered that the Master specifically told them to do nothing until after receiving the Heavenly benediction, saying "Tarry ye at Jerusalem until ye be endued with power from on high."

Accrediting them with the very best of heart intention, it was, nevertheless, effrontery on their part to select two names and to determine that one or the other must be the successor of Judas. They had no authority for so doing. As for the one upon whom the lot fell, Matthias, we hear nothing further of him. On the contrary, in God's due time, he himself brought forth Saul of Tarsus, an Israelite indeed, a Pharisee of the Pharisees, who, however, perverse in his conduct, was thoroughly conscientious, and verily thought he did God service.

St. Paul himself tells us that he was not one whit behind the very chiefest of the Apostles and that in respect to visions and revelations he had more than they all. He goes back to the time when Christ appeared to him on the way to Damascus and when he declared that Ananias, "He is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name unto the Gentiles and to kings, and to the people of Israel." St. Paul tells us that he found evidences that God had chosen him for a special service, from his mother's womb. And such special preparation and supervision we doubt not was applicable to all of the twelve, even as also with John the Baptist in his work.—Acts 9:15, Gal. 1:15.

"A CROWN OF TWELVE STARS"

The Lord's specialization of the twelve Apostles is variously referred to. He said: "Have I not chosen you twelve?" and again, "Ye shall sit on twelve thrones." In the symbolical book of Revelation he pictures the church as a woman, clothed with sunlight, standing over or near the moon, which symbolizes the Jewish Law Covenant; and upon her head was a crown of twelve stars, representing the twelve apostles of the Lamb.

Again, later on in the same book, we find pictured the church in glory beyond the veil, the bride—the New Jerusalem. Of this city we read that it had twelve foundations, all precious stones; and in the twelve foundations were the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb. We believe that we need no better evidence on the subject.

The recognition of successors to the apostles was one of the first errors after their death. Every bishop was recognized as one of the successors and hence as possessing Apostolic authority. It was not long until the words of the original twelve were neglected. The living bishops were acknowledged as speaking with the same divine authority—up-to-date. Later great church councils were called, in which these bishops, as claimed successors to the apostles, decided what should and

what should not be allowed by the church, what was and what was not orthodox.

It can be readily seen that this exaltation of false prophets (Rev. 2:2), contrary to the divine arrangement, opened a flood-gate of error, however well intentioned all concerned may have been. It is surprising that so many still hold to the creeds thus formulated by pseudo-apostles. The need of the hour is a recognition of these facts and an abandonment of all those creeds and a return to the words of Jesus and the apostles and the prophets. Only thus can we hope to regain the position lost. Only thus can we extricate ourselves from the multiplied errors represented in the six hundred divisions of the church of Christ, and of the six hundred variations of the original Gospel message. Only thus can we return to the "one Lord, one faith, one baptism," one Father, one Savior, and one "church of the first-born, whose names are written in heaven." —Eph. 4:4-6; Heb. 12:23.

GOOD OMEN FROM ROME

If it is surprising to find the head of the church of Rome leading the way back from this error, it should all the more be a cause for rejoicing, and this is just what is taking place. The Pope, realizing that the public no longer have reverential confidence in the bishops as inspired men, the successors of the apostles, realizes also the need of some great publicly acknowledged standard of divine truth. Undoubtedly it is this which led "the holy father" to send a circular to all the cardinals and bishops urging upon the Catholic public to study the Holy Scriptures—the words of Jesus and the apostles, and their explanation of the law and the prophets.

Alas, that Protestants should be laggards at this moment! that many of the great and learned of them are today inclined to make sport of the entire subject of divine inspiration! Alas! Protestants are being told by the Higher Critics that Jesus and the apostles were undoubtedly deceived when they made quotations from the Old Testament Scriptures and accredited them to Moses, Isaiah, etc., for the Higher Critics are wiser (?) than Jesus and the apostles.

The latter portion of our study, from St. Matthew's Gospel, does not refer particularly to the apostles, but chiefly to all who become followers of Christ, and believe on him through their word.

THE PALACE OF BLESSEDNESS

Matthew 5:1-12.—April 28.

Text:—"*Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.*"—Verse 8.

Of the Great Teacher we read, "He spake as never man spake." He was the Man Christ Jesus, but he was not a fallen man, not a sinner. His life was transferred from a heavenly to an earthly condition; hence, as a man, he was "holy, harmless, undefiled and separate from sinners." (Heb. 7:26.) More than this, at the time of his consecration to death, he entered into a covenant of sacrifice with Jehovah, and thereupon he received anointing of the holy Spirit—this was the power of the Highest. What need have we for wonder, then, when we read that he taught as one having authority—as one who knew, who understood clearly and positively the things which he represented!

The eight Beatitudes illustrate the difference between the teachings of Jesus and all other teachings from every other quarter. He had a new view of what to present. His is a different message from all other messages to this day. While other teachers instructed the people to hold up their heads, to remember noble ancestors, etc., and thereby be blessed, Jesus encouraged his hearers to realize that the poor in spirit, the humble-minded, would receive the great blessings.

While other teachers held forth the rich, the great, the learned, the mighty, the influential amongst men as the patterns to be copied, if happiness would be attained, Jesus, in the beatitudes, sets forth the reverse. His prescriptions for happiness have indeed been followed by a few, and these alone appreciate their merit and are finding the blessings promised, both for the present life and for that which is to come.

The contrast between the Ten Commandments of the Mosaic law and the eight beatitudes declared by Jesus on the Mount, illustrate in considerable degree the difference between the Law Dispensation, and the Dispensation of Grace. The law commanded the "house of servants" what they should and what they should no do. "Moses was faithful as a servant all over his house." (Heb. 3:5, 6.) He delivered to the "house of servants" typical Israel—the divine law, by the keeping of which they might be blessed and used in the divine service.

But the Gospel message is a still higher one. It does not ignore the law given by Moses to the "house of servants." It recognizes the law as just, and holy, and good, and that Israel did not obtain that which they sought, because unable, through the weakness of heredity, to keep the spirit of God's perfect law. The new dispensation, which Jehovah inaugurated through Jesus, provides full ransom sacrifice for all sinners, and proposes ultimately to bless and to assist all out of all the weakness of heredity—not only Israel, but the entire race of Adam. The law feature will be maintained, but grace and mercy will come in to render the necessary assistance to the keeping of the law. But before that new era of world blessing is introduced, the divine arrangement proposes to gather a special class, all of whom must be "copies of God's dear Son." (Rom. 8:29, Diaglott.) These are to be his joint-heirs, in every sense of the word—in the sufferings and self-denials and persecutions and sacrifices of the present life, as well as in the glories, the honor and immortality of the future life.

CALLED TO BE THE ELECT

The mission of Jesus and his teachings, at his first advent, were not to the world, but to a special class: "He that hath an ear to hear, let him hear." The message for the world will go forth at his second advent and we have the assurance that then all the blinded eyes will be opened and all the deaf ears will be unstopped, and the knowledge of the glory of God will fill the whole earth.

In today's study, Jesus was addressing such of the Jews as had the hearing ear, such as had an inclination to be his disciples. He was addressing the class to whom he said, "If any man will be my disciple, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me, that where I am there shall my disciple be." It was to this class that the Beatitudes were spoken, not with thunderings of Sinai, not with threats of vengeance and death if the lessons were not learned.

The Master was addressing such as believed on him, the class for whom he was about to appear in the presence of God, after finishing his sacrificial work, to impute to them his covering for their blemishes and imperfections, and to give them a standing with the Father, and to make their sacrifices "holy and acceptable to God." (Rom. 12:1.) He was instructing these as to how they could best make their calling and election sure, how they could the more successfully win the great "prize" to which they were called. Others may gather precious lessons from these Beatitudes, but only the spirit-begotten can appreciate them fully.

THE PALACE OF BLESSEDNESS

The foundation of the Palace of Blessedness is Humility. None can ever hope for a share in the Messianic kingdom except as he is humble-minded: "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." To such and such only will this great blessing come. It would never do for God to accept as a member of the kingdom class one possessed of the spirit of pride and selfish ambition. In Satan's experience we have an illustration of what pride might accomplish. God proposes that humility shall be a primary test as respects the bride class.

The Palace Reception Room, upon the foundation of Humility, on the ground floor of the palace, is the chamber of sorrow—mourning. Only such as know what it is to be touched with the feeling of human infirmities can be members of the royal priesthood, which by and by is to deal with and assist back to harmony with God whoever wills of all humanity. Besides, this reception-room of sorrow and mourning seems necessary for our complete separation from the things of the world, the flesh and the devil. Few have ever been saints without passing through sorrowful experiences. We remember Jesus' words, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." Yes, the reception room of mourning is necessary for us before we can appreciate the comfort which God: has provided for this particular class—"his elect" "Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted."

The Palace Library is meekness. None can be successfully taught of the Lord and fully enjoy the Palace of Blessedness without the quality of meekness or teachableness. Into this library the follower of Jesus must frequently go, there to learn valuable lessons, without which he could not make progress in his faith-building and character-development: "Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth." As members of Messiah, heirs of God and joint-heirs with Jesus, their Lord, these will come into the full possession, the full control of the earth. For a thousand years this control will be maintained while mankind will be taught valuable lessons and be uplifted out of

sin and degradation and death to the perfect manhood lost by Father Adam, redeemed by Jesus. Only at the close of the Messianic reign will the meek turn over their inheritance, the earth to mankind. Then those of the earth who will receive the control will be such of mankind as will have learned their lessons of meekness.

The Dining Room: Hunger for Righteousness. All who will be joint-heirs with Christ will be lovers of righteousness and haters of iniquity, in likeness of the Redeemer. It is very important, therefore, that in our Palace of Blessedness we have a large and well-appointed dining room, where our hunger and thirst for righteousness may be encouraged and satisfied at the same time. "Blessed are they who hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled." They will get their fill of it, for their own perfection in the first resurrection, and in the establishment of righteousness in all the earth, during the thousand years of Messiah's reign.

The Door of the Palace: Mercy. One of the most important lessons for the new creature to learn is love, sympathy, mercy. In the divine arrangement we must go out and in this door constantly. Our own imperfections continually require divine mercy and should as continually impress upon us the merciful disposition toward those with whom we have to do. Only thus will we be fitted and prepared to be faithful and merciful members of the royal priesthood in dealing with and blessing the world of mankind during the Messianic Kingdom. "Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy;" "If ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your heavenly Father forgive your trespasses"; "Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us."

The Palace Window, through which we may see God, is purity of heart. We cannot, while in the flesh, attain absolute purity in thought, word or deed, but we can have heart purity—pureness of intention and desire. Only such as have this heart condition may hope to attain the kingdom honors and to see him whom no human has seen, neither can see. "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God."

The Parlor of our Palace is represented by the characteristics of the peacemaker. It implies a certain resistance and victory in respect to our own affairs, furnishes us the opportunity to help others. "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the children of God."

The Kitchen of our Palace represents the trials and difficulties incidental to the rounding out of our characters as a whole and our proper nourishment and upbuilding spiritually. "Blessed are ye when men shall revile you and say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my name's sake; rejoice, and be exceedingly glad, for great is your reward in heaven."

THE RICH MAN IN HELL

LUKE 6:20-26; 16:19-31.—MAY 5.

TEXT:—"*A man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth.*"—Luke 12:15.

Not all the poor are to be blessed and to inherit the kingdom of God, etc., set forth in this lesson. We are to notice particularly the setting of the Master's words. He lifted up his eyes on his disciples, and said, "Blessed are ye poor, for yours is the kingdom of God"—"ye shall be filled"—"your reward is great in heaven." Undoubtedly poverty is a greater aid to discipleship than wealth. The cost of discipleship is the surrender of every earthly ambition to follow in the footsteps of Jesus.

The rich are disadvantaged because theirs would be the greater sacrifice. "How hardly shall a rich man enter into the kingdom of God"—become a joint-heir with Christ in his Messianic kingdom which for a thousand years is to bless the world! The rich are disadvantaged because their wealth preserves them from many trials to which the poor are subjected. They have so many consolations and comforts now that the thought of sacrificing these to follow the Master appalls them and the kingdom glories seem to them less real and less attractive than to the disconsolate.

The lesson for us is that if we would win the great prize and the kingdom we must not set our hearts upon earthly things, nor trust in uncertain riches. Contrariwise, we must realize that our all, much or little, is the Lord's and that faithfulness in sacrificing what we have will decide whether or not we shall share his glory.

THE RICH MAN IN HELL

The second part of our lesson is one of our Lord's most striking parables. We read that he opened his mouth in parables and dark sayings, "that hearing, they might hear and not understand." Of all our Lord's parables this one has been most seriously misunderstood. Indeed, it is accepted as a literal statement, notwithstanding the fact that we read again, "Without a parable spake he not unto them." Only a slight investigation, however, is necessary to demonstrate that this a parable—that it would be unreasonable to consider it to be a statement of literal facts. For instance, it would be unreasonable to suppose that a man would be sent, after death, to torment merely because in the present life he fared sumptuously every day, lived in a fine house, and wore purple and fine linen. Nothing whatever is said about the character of the man, good or bad, and we are not permitted to add to the Word of God. The rich man represented a class.

Similarly, the poor man, after death, must have symbolized a class, because no reason is given for his blessing after death, except that he was poor, covered with sores and lay at the rich man's gate eating his crumbs.

Considered as a parable, this is one of the most interesting and helpful of all our Lord's utterances. The rich man of the parable represents the Jewish nation, highly favored of God. The bountiful table represents the rich promises of the law and the prophets, which were theirs alone up to the time that they nationally died to those favors. The rich man's purple clothing represents royalty—the fact that they are God's typical kingdom.

David and Saul sat upon the throne of the kingdom of the Lord, and when the kingdom was removed in the days of Zedekiah the declaration was made that it would afterward be restored, with Messiah as king. The "fine linen" of the rich man represented the justification which God had granted to the Jewish nation alone thus far. It was a typical justification, accomplished through the Law Covenant and its sacrifices for sin atonement administered by a typical priest year by year.

A harvesting of the Jewish people began with our Lord's ministry and lasted for forty years. It ended in the year A. D. 70, when the rich man, as a nation, died at the hands of Titus and the Roman army. Nationally, the rich man is buried, and will be non-existent until the due time, when the Lord's blessing will return to the Jewish people, as explained by St. Paul in Romans 11:25-35. But although nationally dead, the Jewish people have been very much alive ever since, and have been ostracised and persecuted and tormented with fiery trials.

Although the nation of the Jews contains representatives of all the tribes, it is specially represented in Judah and Benjamin; and hence these two tribes constitute the one rich man. The other ten tribes, "scattered abroad," would proportionately represent the "five brethren" mentioned in the parable. This thought is confirmed by the statement, "They have Moses and the prophets, let them hear them." None but the twelve tribes of Israel had Moses and the prophets.

LAZARUS IN ABRAHAM'S BOSOM

Lazarus, the poor outcast, who was longing for a share of the rich man's favor and privileges, represented a certain class of Gentiles, such as the Centurion, whose servant Jesus healed, and who had such faith in Jesus that he said, "I am not worthy that thou shouldst come into my house, but speak the word and my servant shall be healed." Jesus declared that he had not found such faith as that amongst the Israelites. Another of these Gentile outcasts was the Centurion Cornelius, the first Gentile received into the Gospel privileges. Of him it is written that he reverenced God, prayed always, and gave much alms to the poor.

Of the same Lazarus class was the Syro-Phenician woman, who sought Jesus that he would heal her daughter. Because she was a Gentile Jesus answered, "It is not proper that I should take the children's bread and give it to dogs"—the Gentiles, "dogs" being a familiar name for all outside the pale of Judaism. The woman at once recognized the application and answered, "Yea, Lord, yet the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from the children's table." In answer to such faith Jesus granted her a crumb from the divine table.

Here, then, we see the Lazarus class, sin-sick, covered with sores—because not sharers in Israel's yearly sin-atonement sacrifices—hungry, because all of the promises of God primarily belonged to Israel—the companions of dogs, who licked their sores—this also intimating that they were Gentiles. They were outside the gate of divine favor, this illustrating the same lesson—that they were aliens, strangers and foreigners to the commonwealth of Israel. This Lazarus class, composed chiefly of Gentiles, had as its nucleus "the outcasts of Israel"—the publicans and sinners, who heard the Gospel message gladly, but whom the scribes and Pharisees rejected, disfellowshiped and put out of the synagogues, disowning them as Jews.

The parable pictures a great change in this Lazarus class;

they died to the conditions wherein they then were. They ceased to be the poor beggars, aliens and strangers, sin-sick, weary and hungry. But Lazarus was not buried, as was the rich man; "he was carried by the angels" to the bosom of Abraham. The angels were the apostles and ministers of the Gospel—specially St. Peter and St. Paul. These declared to the Gentiles that whereas once they were "aliens, strangers and foreigners to the commonwealth of Israel," they were now "brought nigh" through faith in the Lord Jesus, and through the begetting of the holy Spirit.

Abraham typified God, the Father of the faithful and the carrying of Lazarus to "Abraham's bosom" symbolically said that the outcasts of Israel and the worthy Gentiles became children of God and heirs of Abraham, who typified God. Thus also wrote the apostles, "Ye are brought nigh through the blood of Christ"; "If ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise." The promise reads that "all the families of the earth shall be blessed" by this seed of Abraham. Thus St. Paul wrote, "Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh, but the elect obtained it, and the rest were blinded," and "wrath came upon that people to the uttermost," "that all things written in the law and the prophets concerning them would be fulfilled."—Rom. 11:7.

The Jew in his misery has beheld with jealous eye the favor of God manifested toward those whom he despised. He has even humbled himself to ask that relief might be sent to him through Christian Gentiles—symbolically, even "one drop" of refreshment. But no relief will be afforded until the end of this age—until the Messianic kingdom shall be established; and then Israel (both dead and living) shall obtain mercy through the elect.—Rom. 11:31, 32.

One fulfillment of the request of the parable for a "drop of water," occurred several years ago when the Jews memorialized President Roosevelt, requesting his good offices with the Russian Government for the abatement of the persecutions of the Jews there. The President replied that he regretted the inability of complying with the request because the etiquette of nations prohibited such a suggestion being offered by one nation to another with whom it was at peace.

LOVING OUR NEIGHBORS

Luke 6:27-38; Rom. 13:8-10.—May 12.

"Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself."—Romans 13:9.

Today's study is from Saint Luke's account of the sermon on the Mount. It does not profess to be a regulation for the world, but merely applies to saints—to those who have consecrated their lives fully to follow in the footsteps of Jesus—to suffer with him that they may also reign with him. Even these may not be able to live up to every feature of the Master's instructions, because of weakness in their fallen flesh. We must take the Master's words here and elsewhere addressed to the faithful as representing the full, complete, perfect standard. It is for each disciple to recognize this supreme standard and to measure and gauge his thoughts and words and doings thereby, and to as closely as possible attain this standard.

We are to remember, however, that as no Jew could keep the law in its spirit, perfectly, neither could any of any other nationalities keep it. The Jew's failure to keep the law meant his failure to gain everlasting life, but we (the followers of Jesus) are not under the Law Covenant, but under Grace. We are to keep the divine law as nearly as we possibly can and to accept by faith God's arrangement for us in Jesus—that "by his stripe we are healed," our shortcomings are made good.

Thus doing our very best, yet surely coming short, the apostle's words apply to us: "The righteousness of the Law is fulfilled in us who walk not after the flesh, but after the spirit." We walk after the spirit, and would walk up to it if we could, but, being unable to do so, "The blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all sin." This is the happy state of all who through faith and consecration become children of God during his Gospel age. Their faith and good intentions and good effort, by the grace of God, make good their deficiencies.

As for others than God's people, he does not speak to them at all, except to tell them that they are sinners under the sentence of death, but that he has made provision for their reconciliation through the blood of the cross, and that whether they become disciples of Christ or not under the call to brideship nevertheless their words and conduct in the present life will all advantage or disadvantage them in the life to come. In this secondary way the world—all mankind aside from the church, the consecrated—may be measurably enlightened by the Master's teachings in this lesson, even while it is not addressed to them. They may see its high standards and appreciate them to some extent, but not fully, unless they realize that the church class, called in this Gospel age, is required to undergo special trial, testing, proving, as to loyalty to God, meekness, gentleness, patience, long-suffering, brotherly kindness, love.

"BUT I SAY UNTO YOU"

The two tables of the law given to Israel were requirement of justice, but Jesus and his followers take a still higher plane and, waiving their own rights, they become sacrificers of their own comforts, preferences, desires, to the doing of the divine will, to the serving of the brethren and mankind in general. Justice never requires sacrifice. Thus discipleship and attainment with Jesus of a share in the sufferings of this present time and in the glory that shall follow mean something more than merely rendering to every man his due, for no one has a right to render another less than his due, nor to do injury to another. Jesus not only did no injury, but, additionally, he sacrificed his own rights on behalf of mankind, and he set his disciples an example that they should walk in his steps.—1 Pet. 2:21.

The path of love is, therefore, as Jesus describes it, under present conditions, a "narrow way"; narrow in the gate, difficult the way of life now open. Only the saintly few will be willing to walk therein, and only these will gain the great prize, "the pearl of great price," joint-heirship in Messiah's kingdom. Hearken! Do not merely observe the Golden Rule toward your enemies, but love them, and "do good to them that hate you, and bless them that curse you, and pray for them that despitefully use you."

The Master's expression, "Unto him that smiteth thee on the one cheek offer also the other," is to be taken as signifying simply, Do not render evil for evil, even though he smite thee on the other cheek also. Our Lord himself, when smitten, according to the report, did not invite the smiting of the other cheek, but rather he defended himself to the extent of criticising the evil deed. But if he had been smitten on the other cheek also, let us not for a moment think that he would have resisted, in the sense of rendering blow for blow.

The next statement is more comprehensively given by Matthew: "If any man sue thee at the law and take away thy coat, withhold not thy cloak also." The follower of Jesus may flee from an adversary, or he may resist him to the extent of proper expostulation, but he is to be thoroughly responsive to all government; if the court decides that his coat and his cloak shall both be taken from him, he shall unmurmuringly submit, even though he realize that such a procedure would be unjust and quite at variance with the divine regulation. Paul as well as Jesus used argument in his own defense, not only with the mobs, but also before judges; but they resisted the law—never.

"THIS IS A HARD SAYING"

"Give to everyone that asketh of thee, and of him that taketh away thy goods ask them not again." The broadest interpretation we could consistently give to this would be—Be generous, tender-hearted, err on the side of too great generosity rather than to be hard-hearted, selfish. The Lord could not have meant us to take his words with absolute literalness; as for instance, Give a child a razor if he cries for it; or, give money to the dissipated, that they may injure themselves still more. The spirit of a sound mind forbids that we should understand the Master to teach that we should do anything for another or assist him in any manner that would be really to his injury. This is expressed in the next statement: "As ye would that men should do unto you, do ye also to them likewise." We would surely not wish men to grant a request of ours if they sincerely believed they would be injuring us. Our Master's words inculcate love, beneficence, and must not be construed to the contrary.

Very evidently our Lord was setting up his teachings in contrast with the maxims of the Pharisees, the holiness people of that day. He wished his disciples to see his teachings in their ultra light. To love another because he loved us, or to give to another in the hope that he would equally befriend us, or to do any good act with a hope to have as good or better return, would have nothing specially creditable in itself. It would be doing from a selfish motive.

Jesus' disciples, on the contrary, are to do good for principle's sake and for goodness' sake—to be in full accord with the Heavenly Father, to have his smile and approval. They are to take him as their example and to remember that in

proportion as they are godlike they show forth the spirit of sonship. As, therefore, God is kind to the unthankful and to evildoers, so we should be who have his spirit and who are seeking to walk in his way, in the footsteps of Jesus. The heavenly Father is the example, and although we cannot come up to that example, we can show our loyalty, our faithfulness, by copying him to the extent of our ability.

MERCIFUL TO OBTAIN MERCY

The world during the Messiah's kingdom will be under instruction and lessons, which will include mercy, and an assurance to the willing and obedient of perfection by the close of the kingdom. But the church class, now called out, will have no such long period for their character development, and since they will not attain that perfection here but will require divine mercy, through the imputation of Christ's merit to cover their blemishes, therefore the Lord has arranged that these must expect mercy only in proportion as they will show mercy to others. In other words, all the followers of Jesus have many imperfections to be covered by divine mercy, or else to be atoned for by stripes, punishments, before they die.

In order to develop his saints in generosity and forgiveness, mercy, the Lord has agreed that he will be merciful to them in proportion as they will be merciful to others. What a wondrous reward and what a wondrous incentive! Our Lord's prayer is in agreement with this: "Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us." This does not relate to to the Adamic guilt of the saints, but to their daily shortcomings; their share in original sin and condemnation was canceled through the merit of Christ before they were accepted as his disciples or became followers in his steps as sons of God. What an incentive to God's people to be gracious, forgiving, large-hearted, thus cultivating the heavenly Father's spirit and character, and to be in that condition of heart where they can receive richly of divine bounty and mercy at the throne of grace!

"OWE NO MAN ANYTHING"

Love may go beyond the law and do more than justice could require—in self-sacrifice—but it cannot do less. He who loves his neighbor will be fulfilling the law toward him to the best of his ability. Hence, as the apostle explains to those who are in Christ all the commandments are covered in their covenant of love. They would not injure their neighbor's interests, either by stealing from him, or by bearing false witness against him, or by coveting his things or interests, desiring to take possession of them, or by murder or adultery; nor in any other manner would they encroach upon their neighbor's rights and interests.

Although not under the law of the Ten Commandments, the Christian is under the law of the new commandment, the law of love, which is so much higher that it includes every other law that could be given. Love works no kind of injury to its neighbor; love, therefore, is the fulfilling of that feature of the divine law which applies to our duty toward our neighbor, to love him as ourself. But love can do more than this, and in the case of Jesus it did more, for in love he surrendered rights, privileges, etc., and died, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God. And he is our example as surely as we are his disciples, followers, and prospectively his joint-heirs in his kingdom.

CHRISTIANITY AND THE LAW

MATT. 5:17-26.—MAY 19.

"He that loveth his neighbor hath fulfilled the law."—Rom. 13:8.

Jesus and his apostles expounded the harmony between Christianity and Judaism, nevertheless comparatively few Christians today seem to grasp the subject clearly. Today's study aims to make clear their distinctions and harmonies.

The Great Teacher declared that he came not to destroy the law and the prophets, but to fulfill them. While law was spoken as Moses' Law, it was really the divine law given to Israel as a basis for the divine covenant with that nation, and Moses merely stood as mediator of that Law Covenant—that agreement by which Israel was obligated to keep the law, and God was obligated if they did so to grant them everlasting life, divine favor and the glorious privilege of being his instruments for the blessing of all nations, under Messiah's kingdom.

The failure of even the most sincere Israelites to gain the promised everlasting life proved, not that God's law was an unjust one, which would need at the same time to be set aside as unworkable, but that Israel, like the remainder of the world, shared by inheritance Adamic weaknesses, which so impaired their moral quality that they could not keep God's perfect law—in its spirit; the spirit of the law our Lord defined to be wholehearted love for God and "Golden Rule" love for the neighbor.

The Gospel of Jesus magnifies the Jewish law by admitting its righteousness, its reasonableness and by admitting that the fault is entirely with humanity. The proposition of Jesus in respect to his followers is this: He, being perfect, was able to keep the Mosaic law perfectly; and he had a right, therefore, to everlasting life, and needed not to have died; but instead of retaining his life he laid it down sacrificially, as a part of the great divine plan for human redemption. That sacrifice will bring to the world the blessed privileges and opportunities for eternal life which, it has been promised, Messiah's kingdom will bring. But meantime the Redeemer, carrying out Jehovah's plans, offers an imputation of his merit to any who have his spirit—that of full consecration to do the Father's will by laying down the present life sacrificially, to gain with the Redeemer a heavenly, spiritual life, glory, honor, immortality, the divine nature, as Messiah's joint-heir in his kingdom. All who would thus do would be counted as a part of the spiritual seed of Abraham, through whom all the families of the earth will eventually receive their blessing.

This offer was made to the Jews first, but, after gathering all the willing and obedient of that nation, the call was extended to the willing and obedient having ears to hear and hearts to obey regardless of all national lines. To all these the terms of discipleship were made clear—terms of self-sacrifice unto death: "If any man will be my disciple let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me; and where I am there shall my disciple be."

This class was promised everlasting life, even though they were unable to keep in every particular the spirit of the Mosaic law. The Jews reasoned that this was a setting aside of the law; Jesus and the apostles answer, No. These disciples or followers of Jesus sacrifice their earthly interests and rights and thus become reckonedly dead to earthly things. God accepts their sacrifices and begets them of the holy Spirit. Thus they become new creatures in Christ. These new creatures are not under any law of sin or death, nor have they any imperfections. "The law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made them free from the law of sin and death."—Rom. 8:2.

But, the objector asks, how could God accept a blemished offering? and, furthermore, are not these new creatures held responsible for the conduct of their flesh, so long as they live—until their sacrifice is completed?

The Scriptures answer: The great High Priest, who presents these offerings as part of his own sacrifice, covers their imperfections and blemishes by an imputation of the merit of his own sacrifice, which is already in the hands of justice awaiting for application on behalf of the sins of the world. When this High Priest thus presents us to God, covered with his own merit as a robe, we are assured that the sacrifices are "holy and acceptable unto God."—Rom. 12:1.

As for the subsequent weakness of the flesh, the new creature is indeed held responsible for its mortal body, but since our High Priest tasted death for every man and for all sins of heredity, therefore these new creatures in Christ are assured that all their trespasses, whether of ignorance or weakness, may be forgiven, and that the Redeemer, their Head and Representative in glory, will upon application impute his merit for the cancellation of such imperfections, that they may thus be maintained in their standing with the Father, "without spot or wrinkle or any such thing."—Eph. 5:27.

Thus are the demands of divine law met in respect to the church. But the church's covenant means more than merely the observance of the law; it is a covenant to sacrifice, and justice, the divine law, could not demand sacrifice. The church's covenant, which she shares with her Lord and Redeemer, is an agreement to sacrifice all earthly interests in the doing of the divine will at any cost. The reward for the keeping of this covenant will be obtained in the first resurrection change to heavenly glory, honor and immortality. The terms of this covenant read: "Gather together my saints unto me, saith the Lord, those who have made a covenant with me by sacrifice."—Psa. 50:5.

FULFILLING THE PROPHETS ALSO

To the Jews it seemed as though the Gospel invitation would make void all the prophets, of whom Saint Peter said that all the holy prophets since the world began had spoken of restitution times and blessings at the coming of Messiah. (Acts 3:19-21.) To the Jew it still seems as though there must be

some mistake, that if Jesus were the Messiah he should have begun a work of restitution, a work of social, moral, intellectual and physical uplift for mankind, using Israel as his channel, his agency. The Jew points to the eighteen centuries of Christian preaching, and says if Christians are right it make void all of the prophecies of the past. What is the answer to this?

Jesus gives the answer, saying that the prophecies are being fulfilled. The prophecies tell not only of Jesus but also of his brethren, the "little flock," the bride class; and that class must be selected before other features of the prophecies can be fulfilled. "I will declare thy name unto my brethren."—(Psa. 22:22; Heb. 2:12.) This is the present work—the work of selecting the class mentioned by the Psalmist, saying, "I have said ye are gods, all of you sons of the Highest; but ye shall all die like men."—Psa. 82:6.

The law and prophets point out the necessity of a priestly class under the High Priest—of a sacrificing class which would become a royal priesthood. These prophecies are in process of fulfillment; neither the law nor the prophets are being ignored. Soon this feature of the divine plan will have been accomplished; the church will be glorified with her Lord, and then those features of the law and prophets which dazzle the eyes of Israel will begin to be fulfilled, and will bring them blessings, and through them blessings to the world far beyond their highest conceptions.

If therefore any of the followers of Jesus should violate the Ten Commandments and teach men so to do, it would manifestly be done through ignorance and misunderstanding, and would thus mark himself as a follower of Jesus on a low plane—one of the least in the kingdom. This would apply amongst the Lord's followers at the present time: the church is the kingdom in embryo, and any brother in such an attitude should be considered by the brethren as weak and should not be given a position of prominence in the service of the church.

THE PHARISEES' STANDARD LOWER

In Jesus' day the Pharisees prided themselves on their zeal for the law and found fault with Jesus' disciples and with himself for healing the sick on the Sabbath. Instead of admitting their claims Jesus repeatedly showed them to be fallacious. They were particular respecting the little requirements of the law, but were careless respecting its spirit of love. This Jesus termed hypocrisy; He declared that unless his followers would be nearer right in heart than were the Pharisees they would not get into the kingdom at all. (We must remember the difference between the embryo kingdom which was inaugurated at Pentecost and the glorious kingdom into which the faithful will be ushered by the first resurrection change.)

Unless his followers would have more of the spirit of the divine law than the Pharisees they would not be fit for the begetting at Pentecost—none but those who love righteousness and who thus have the spirit of the divine law are acceptable at all in the church—"the church of the first-born, whose names are written in heaven."

The Pharisees held the letter of the law and said, Beware lest you kill a man, for that would subject you to judgment or trial before the council, or local court of your town; but Jesus taught that hatred is murder, even if it do not go to the length of killing. So high is this standard amongst the Lord's consecrated people that for one of them to be even slightly angry would be a serious matter; and if he were angry enough to call a brother Christian "a fool" it would imply that he were in serious danger of the second death—Gehanna. All Christ's followers, therefore, must not only guard their actions but also their lips and the very thoughts of their hearts, that even in thoughts they shall be in fullest accord with the very spirit of the divine law of love; and if on approaching the throne of grace they find any other spirit in their hearts they should go no further toward God, but first be reconciled to their brother. Under a parable of arrest, condemnation and imprisonment our Lord teaches his disciples that if they have a wrong feeling toward a brother they should make great haste to settle the matter. Every moment of delay endangers their spiritual standing with the Lord and makes it more difficult for themselves in their relationship with God.

The intimation is that if we have wronged a brother and delay to make the matter right and the case come before the Lord for settlement, we will be obliged to suffer the full penalty of our neglect, "the uttermost farthing" before we will be fully restored to divine favor and fellowship.

GOD'S INHERITANCE

Ephesians 1:18.

And can it be
That God designs with you and me
Forevermore to dwell?
Can his great might
Secure for us the right
To be his Israel?
A people chosen to proclaim his worth,
To sound the praises of his glory forth,
To lead the van of an adoring earth?

This poor, weak clay
Can he transform it in such a way
That it shall yield divinity?
This sin-stained mind
So cleanse that he in us shall find
Affinity?
Th' abode of his eternal rest,
That habitation which he loveth best,
His chosen Zion? City ever blest?

If this be so,
Not all the wealth this world can know
Will me suffice;
Nor name, nor fame, nor power, nor pleasure here below
My soul entice.
How poor these transitory things of earth
Beside this treasure of unending worth,
This heavenly followship, this royal birth!

And can it be
That down throughout succeeding ages he
With ardent longing waits
Th' eventful day
When—sin all purged away—
We'll sit within his gates?
Can we be subjects of our God's desire?
Doth he our loving fellowship require?
And to this height may such as we aspire?

How good to know
His never-failing Word proclaims it so!
Here, Lord, I give myself to thee,
Work out thy gracious purposes in me
Until in heaven thy blessed face I see,
And dwell with thee through all eternity.

WM. W. JOHNSTON—Africa.

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THE WORLD'S CONVERSION

REPORT OF MISSIONS INVESTIGATING COMMITTEE. INTERNATIONAL BIBLE STUDENTS ASSOCIATION

At its convention held September 1-10, 1911, the International Bible Students Association appointed a Committee to tour the world and supply an unvarnished report of the true condition of affairs in Oriental lands amongst the peoples usually termed "heathens."

The proposition of a certain Laymen's Missionary Movement to promptly collect $30,000,000 and immediately convert the world naturally aroused the query respecting the possibility of attaining such desirable results. No doubt existed that benevolent people would willingly expend thirty million dollars, and much more, if the results aimed at could be attained. On the other hand, many rumors had been reaching Europe and America respecting the inefficiency of the Missions and Missionaries already in the Oriental lands. These tales possibly had something to do with the falling off of contributions to Missionary Societies. It is the thought of many, however, that the secret of the curtailment of donations to various propaganda is the same as applies to the home work of all Christian denominations. The secret is that the masses of the people, as well as the wealthy, are rapidly losing faith in revealed religion—in the Bible.

The higher critics in all of our colleges and seminaries, and in the chief pulpits of Christendom, have for fifty years been carrying on a subtle warfare against the Bible. Are we not

now beginning to see the fruits of their labors in a general agnosticism? Many manifest their loss of faith merely by a non-attendance at religious services, and by failure to contribute as formerly to religious benevolences. Others are showing their agnosticism by joining Socialism, which many believe is gradually leading them to atheism and anarchy.

Bible Students of the I. B. S. A. are very generally of the opinion that the Bible teaches that nothing short of Messiah's kingdom in power and great glory can scatter the thick religious darkness in the world—that nothing short of that kingdom, as the "Sun of Righteousness," can scatter the darkness that covers the earth and the gross darkness that benights the heathen. These Bible Students very generally hold that the Bible teaches that the bride of Christ (the saintly few of this Gospel age) must be completed, and must by the first resurrection be glorified with the Redeemer and sit with him in his throne, before the time will come when Jesus shall enlighten the world.

In other words, "Jesus is the true Light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world." But, in divine providence, the world separates itself into two distinct classes. The first and smaller class consists of those "elect" who have the hearing ear, the understanding and appreciating heart, and the willing mind to be the footstep followers of Jesus, and thus to gain the great prize of joint-heirship with him in his kingdom. To these the light of Truth comes now. To others, the non-elect, it will come by and by, when, according to divine promise, "All the blind eyes shall be opened, and all the deaf ears shall be unstopped."

EVERY KNEE SHALL BOW

These Bible Students are very generally agreed that the long-promised "Golden Age" of Messiah's kingdom is near at hand. Very generally they quote and rejoice in such Scripture promises as, "When he shall appear, we shall also appear with him in glory." (Colossians 3:4) This appearing or revealing will be to the world, respecting whom Saint Paul writes, "The whole creation groaneth and travaileth together until now," . . . "waiting for the manifestation of the sons of God." They quote and rejoice in the promise which declares, 'If we suffer with him we shall also reign with him." Gladly, therefore, do they rejoice in tribulations and misrepresentations and whatever divine providence permits, knowing that all of these things are working out for them a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory—in the kingdom.

These Bible Students have come to very generally understand that the Scriptures teach that Messiah's kingdom must first enlighten the world before, "Unto him every knee shall bow and every tongue confess to the glory of God." Hence, while sympathetic with all good works, these Students are not expecting the world's conversion as the result of Missionary effort, and are not disappointed that the eighteen centuries of the preaching of the Gospel has not brought such a result.

A MESSAGE TO ALL NATIONS

The interest of these Bible Students in the present status of missionary work centers in the fact that they understand the Bible to teach that the preaching of the Gospel in all the world has been eminently proper, not with the expectation of converting the world, but, as the Master said, to give a witness to all the world, and to gather an elect few from all nations, peoples, kindreds and tongues for membership in his bride class—to sit with him in his throne during the thousand years, co-operating in the work of uplifting the race as a whole.

Indeed, we understand that one of the principal motives associated with the sending out of the Committee of Investigation was to ascertain whether or not there would appear to be saints in those distant lands, who, as yet, have no knowledge of "the Gospel of the kingdom," and of the fact that we are now close in the harvest time of this age, and probably very close to the dawning of the new dispensation of Messianic glory. It was with this in view that the Association privately authorized Pastor Russell, its President, to spend as much as seven thousand dollars in publishing the Gospel of the kingdom in Oriental lands, provided in his judgment and in the judgment of the Committee there were saintly hearts and minds in those lands likely to appreciate the message and to be ripened thereby for the heavenly "garner."

The Committee did not find the time at their disposal sufficient to permit them to visit Burmah, Africa and Australasia. It recommends that another Committee be appointed for that work, and that it have due consideration at the next General Convention of the I. B. S. A. This convention is announced to be held at Pertle Springs, Chautauqua grounds near Warrensburg, Mo., June 1-8, 1912.

The gentlemen who have served on this committee are all earnest Bible Students. Their zeal in the matter of this investigation may be judged from the fact that they not only paid their own expenses, but additionally defrayed Pastor Russell's and all secretarial expenses. These gentlemen have long been deeply interested in the propagation of the Gospel, both at home and abroad. From the first we thought the committee a remarkably fair one, and we believe the Report fully justifies that opinion. While it tells some plain truths, and lays bare some important facts, it is in no sense harsh or unkind, but on the contrary, sympathetic.

So interesting is the Committee's Report and so instructive that we have practically devoted one entire number of THE WATCH TOWER to its presentation. We trust our readers will understand and appreciate our endeavors. We are printing a very large edition of this number, believing that it will be of interest to many outside our present list of subscribers. All such are cordially invited to become subscribers, and to join with us in the study of our Heavenly Father's Word in its own light—without the "spectacles" of any denominational creed. We can supply a large demand for extra copies of this issue, at 5c. per copy, postpaid, to any part of the world. Tell your friends desiring these to address THE WATCH TOWER, Brooklyn, N. Y. The committee's report follows:

THE HAWAIIAN ISLANDS VISITED

Our first stop was at the Hawaiian Islands. Our investigations were practically confined to Honolulu, the principal city, but there we were in touch with the general situation throughout the group of thirteen islands. We were astonished to note the degree of civilization manifested by the entire population, composed of Hawaiians, Chinese, Japanese, Filipinos, Koreans, Portuguese and Americans. Of the two hundred thousand population about seven thousand are Americans or of Caucasian mixture.

Many of the natives live in very cramped quarters, in what is termed "slum districts." These, nevertheless, are not so much inferior to American slum districts as one might suppose.

We visited a "Settlement," a philanthropic arrangement of very simple character in the midst of the poor and for their assistance. It has a playground for children, swimming baths, a gymnasium and entertainment room, a dispensary for simple remedies, a kindergarten room, and alongside an apartment for the convenience of consumptives, to whom advice is given respecting the care of their health and the avoidance of the spreading of the infection to their families. The gentleman in charge explained to us that the city of thirty thousand is divided into eight districts, and that eight ladies visit these districts regularly every ten days, and their compensation is from $90 to $100 per month. The sugar planters and principal merchants consider it a good business enterprise to thus safeguard the city against cholera, yellow fever and bubonic plague, and care not that it is under church control and so accredited.

We visited the Kakemhame School, founded by Mrs. Bishop, a Hawaiian Princess, who became the wife of an American banker. Her estate maintains the school at an expense of $70,000 per year. Only boys and girls with Hawaiian blood can enjoy the benefits. It is conducted on a luxurious scale, but appears to be of a very practical character and bound to exert a civilizing influence. The school has about 250 pupils, a neat little chapel and the necessary appointments for literary and manual training. The pupils look bright and healthy.

We also visited the Mid-Pacific Institute. The boys' buildings are separate from those for the girls. The total number of pupils was approximately 220, and about evenly divided between the sexes. They have their board and lodging and schooling. A nominal charge of $1 a week is made, but nearly all are charity pupils, we were told. They seem healthy and happy. The classes were much smaller than in America. The grading is very similar to that of our public schools, with the addition of excellent homing influences and instruction for the girls in sewing, cooking, etc., calculated to turn them out useful and helpful wives. Our best wish for American and European children is that they could have as good a start in life as have the pupils in the schools we visited here. Nearly all the teachers, male and female, are American, bright and intelligent and above the American average. We did not learn their rate of pay.

"NOW I LAY ME DOWN TO SLEEP" THE NEAREST APPROACH TO RELIGION

We were rejoicing to think that such practical arrangements have been made along humanitarian lines, and it was with considerable surprise that we learned afterwards that nearly all this work is included in the reports of the American Missionary Association and the American Board of Christian Foreign Missions. Nothing connected with the schools gave any indication of their connection with religious or missionary institutions. The only statement of a religious service coming to our attention was that the smaller children knelt by their beds on retiring at night and sang, "Now I lay

me down to sleep." Indeed, we inquired respecting Christian instruction and were informed that the attempt to give it would alienate the pupils and thus cause the disruption of the schools. We were informed that chapel services are held on Sunday, and also Sunday-school exercises, but that comparatively few of the children attend. The only hope seems to be that the civilizing and educating of these children would later on make them more amenable to Christian instruction.

Departing we were invited to speak a few words of encouragement to the pupils of the girls' school. We sought to impress upon them the advantages of their pleasant and comfortable surroundings, and we connected these creature comforts with the Savior and the influence which doctrine exercises upon the hearts of mankind who properly receive it. We exhorted them to give Jesus a large place in their appreciation and affections. Whether it was imagination or not, it seemed to us that about half of the faces grew dark and scowly while we spoke, and we associated this impression with what the teachers had told us respecting the opposition to everything Christian. Nevertheless, they sang us their Hawaiian farewell song in the natural tongue, which surprised us by its rich and musical qualities.

We visited the Y. M. C. A. in its new building. We learned that its cost, $140,000, was subscribed in six days. It is conveniently arranged for its purposes. In the basement are bowling alleys; on the ground floor, the main offices, a cafe, a reading room, comfortable lounging seats, a room for checkers, chess and dominos, and quite a large room for billiards. On the next floor above is the gymnasium, which is evidently one of the prominent features. Also on this floor is a large room for night school instruction. Above the gymnasium, on the third floor, we understand, there is an auditorium, and also a small room on the first floor for class purposes. The building is in charge of very pleasant gentlemen, who treated us cordially.

It is our opinion that the work in Hawaii is a good one, viewed from the humanitarian standpoint, but an utter failure viewed from the standpoint of Christianization. So far as we could discern, faith in the Redeeming blood of Jesus, in his resurrection and in his coming kingdom have never been taught. But alas! this is becoming too true in Europe and America and amongst Christian people of all denominations. Only comparatively few any longer sing understandingly, "In the cross of Christ I glory."

A gentleman who had resided in the city for forty-two years remarked that in his opinion the Hawaiians are retrograding, are less reliable, less temperate and less moral than they were twenty-five years ago.

REPORT ON MISSIONARY WORK IN JAPAN

We found the Japanese a very interesting people. We traveled nearly seven hundred miles through Japan, and visited various cities aggregating four and a half millions of population, which is about one-tenth of the entire population of Japan. We found the people industrious, peace-loving, polite and kind to each other, and toward foreigners. Although our visit was in the holiday season, when, according to their custom, overindulgence in liquor would be pardonable, nevertheless our entire party, scattered for the purpose of wide observation, noted only twelve intoxicated persons, and three of these were Europeans. Parental love and care were in evidence everywhere. We heard not a harsh expression from parent to child, nor to any one, and witnessed only one altercation, and it trivial. Everybody seemed industrious, minding his own business, and happy. Our united comment was, Would to God as favorable conditions prevailed in Europe and America! We noted nothing resembling profanity, and upon inquiry were told that they use no profanity, and that their strongest expression is "beka"—fool.

We did not, however, conclude that the fretfulness, unhappiness, quarrelsomeness and rudeness and boisterousness frequently in evidence in Europe and America are attributable to Christianity. On the contrary, we surmised that divine providence had sent the message of the Gospel in the direction of the more rude and combative race, which received the letter and form of Christianity in a measure, without generally entering into its spirit of meekness, gentleness, patience, long-suffering, brotherly kindness and love. Our comment further was that if the Japanese should receive the letter of the Gospel and its spirit they would have less difficulty than the Europeans and Americans in the development of the fruits of the Spirit, because naturally more disposed toward gentleness, patience and brotherly kindness.

WHAT OF THE MISSIONARY EFFORTS?

These observations of the Japanese gave us the keener interest in our investigation as to how much, if anything, Christianity has to do with these conditions, to what extent Japan is Christianized, etc. Our findings in the matter at Tokio will serve to illustrate. Our Committee attended nine religious services, besides the two addressed by Pastor Russell. The average attendance at the nine meetings was 59, the smallest being 9, and the largest 250, including the ministers. Two of these services were in the English language; the others were in Japanese and addressed by Japanese ministers. One of the sermons in the English tongue was along the line of Evolution. Although many Japanese understand English they rarely attend preaching in that tongue. We saw but one Japanese at the two English services and he, apparently, was a servant in waiting. We were very agreeably surprised to note the deeply reverential attitude of the majority of those attending the Japanese services, and that fully two-thirds were males. We congratulate the laborers in this missionary field on the devout appearance of the 431 Japanese worshipers observed by us at the seven meetings referred to. Of course, it is impossible to tell accurately the attitude of the heart from the outward demeanor, but reverential attitude and attention should count for considerable.

ENCOURAGEMENTS AND DISCOURAGEMENTS

It was plainly evident that the Missionaries are feeling a considerable degree of discouragement, nor can we blame them. So far as we could learn their work made considerable progress until twenty years ago, since which time a wave of unbelief has swept over Japan, just as in Europe and America. Today the Japanese minds, like the minds of their European and American cousins, are full of interrogation points. In other words, the spirit of agnosticism is more and more prevalent. It is affecting the Missions and their work, and also affecting Buddhism and Shintoism. Although Buddhist temples, recently built, are gorgeous affairs, and although a million dollars has just been raised to build a new Buddhist temple near Yokohama, nevertheless, it is admitted that Buddhism is one the wane—that the number who attend the temples to pray and worship are fewer than formerly, and generally of the more ignorant classes.

The present trend of the Japanese religious sentiment is toward infidelity, doubt and atheism. An inquiry as to the religious sentiment in three of the Japanese schools (University of Tokio) recently showed the following religious census;

Christians, 4; Buddhists, Confucians and Shintos, 17; noncommittal, 46; atheists, 60; agnostics, 282; total, 409. This is a terrible picture, true also, we fear, of many colleges in America and Europe.

Christianity in Japan is in much the same condition as in America and Europe, in two respects. (1) A certain number are true worshippers, devout believers, but they are few. (2) A larger number associate for the advantages they gain in one way or another—as, for instance, the privilege of night schools, Y. M. C. A. gymnasiums, etc., etc. There is considerable sympathy for Christianity amongst those who at heart agnostics, and who class Jesus as a great teacher along with Confucius and Buddha, but who see nothing and know nothing respecting his redemptive work. These realize that Christianity has been helping on in the work of Japanese civilization, and would be sorry to know of anything calculated to hinder the work of the Missionaries. Christianity and all other religions in Japan are on the defensive.

JAPANESE DEMAND PROOFS BEFORE ACCEPTING DOCTRINE

The active minds of the Japanese know that Buddhism cannot answer their questions respecting God and the future, and they come to the Missionaries and native Christians with questions, for which they have as yet received no satisfactory reply. In consequence, they are holding aloof and saying, There is some good in all religions, perhaps, but apparently all of them have more or less error and superstition. We will take advantage of the kindly interest of these foreigners in our welfare. We appreciate the fact that they have invested millions of dollars in churches and colleges in our land. We are confident they have done us good and helped to some extent to break from us the shackles of religious superstition. We will attend their schools and avail ourselves of their kindness, and endeavor to show a kindly disposition toward them; but we do not believe in Jesus as a Savior; we merely recognize him as a great teacher. We think, therefore, that it is unnecessary that we should be baptized. The fact of the matter is we believe we get as good moral teaching from Buddhism as from Christianity. We

will stand aloof, doubting if there is any positive truth on these subjects. Thus it will be seen that the attitude of the Japanese toward Christianity is very much the same as the general attitude of the public throughout Christendom.

We should note that considerable educational work is being carried on at Tokio by the Methodist brethren. Dr. Spencer informs us that they have an attendanee of about 350 girls and 550 young men in their college. They seem to be well equipped. We could wish that the youths of the middle and lower classes in Europe and America were as well provided for.

The Missionaries themselves appear to be an earnest band, but considerably discouraged. And no wonder! Outsiders report that they have considerable denominational conflict and jealous competition, but that steps are now being taken for a general religious Federation. The Missionaries freely admit that in their schools and other work it is necessary to lay stress chiefly upon moral conduct and to say little or nothing about Jesus' redemptive work and other doctrines—otherwise they would lose their hold upon the pupils, who evidently attend the schools chiefly for the educational advantages they offer. We repeat that the Missionaries of Japan have our congratulations upon the work done years ago and our sympathy in respect to the discouragement of the present, and the unfavorable outlook. What the Japanese need is "the Gospel of the kingdom," announcing the second coming of Jesus of the Messiah of Glory, to rule, heal and instruct all the families of the earth. Pastor Russell's sermons gave them more food for thought than they had ever before enjoyed.

THE CONDITIONS AND OUTLOOK IN CHINA

At no one place were we able to penetrate beyond 125 miles inland in the great Empire of China, of 320,000,000 people. But directly and indirectly we visited and inspected the conditions of life in about fifteen cities and villages, whose combined population was about 4,000,000. We saw many sad sights and heard many sad stories, but also both saw and heard other things which comforted and encouraged us.

We were specially impressed with the business faculties of the Chinese, with their energy and general contentment, and, alas, also impressed with the filthiness and unsanitary conditions in which we found them in their large cities. Both young and old, male and female, work, and apparently willingly.

China entire may be said to be revolutionized; few apparently have any sympathy with the Manchu Dynasty, which has just abdicated. The remarkable thing is that the revolutionists, hampered for lack of money, have been able to accomplish so much and to have preserved order so well. True, lawlessness has in several instances gained the upper hand; and, of course, it is still possible that the entire social fabric may be destroyed. There is a reason, however, why this seems improbable: For long centuries the various provinces of China have maintained a kind of local autonomy, not unlike that of Canada and Australia in respect to the British. These provinces or states have long had states rights, slightly after the fashion of the American Union.

MISSIONARIES IN CHINA

Without doubt missionaries have accomplished considerable in China. It is difficult, however, for the Chinese to differentiate between Christian missionaries and Christian tourists, Christian soldiers and sailors, Christian merchants and tradesmen and Christian clergymen who preach to such of these as attend divine service. Gradually, however, we believe they are getting a proper focus upon the matter. We must sympathize with them in this; if we could put ourselves in their places, how strange it would all appear to us! The aloofness of the foreigners and the disdain with which they usually treat the natives is quite unfavorable also to true Christian progress here. Moreover, although the Chinese are aware that some good people are sending large sums of money in their interest, building colleges and hospitals and churches and schools and Y. M. C. A. buildings, with gymnasia, billiard rooms, bowling alleys, etc., they find it difficult to harmonize this benevolence with the fact that foreigners all conspire to keep wages at the lowest point—hindering as much as possible any advance in prices or such improvement in conditions as would raise prices.

Under all these conditions it seems remarkable to us that Christian missionary effort has accomplished so much as we perceive. It seems the more amazing when we reflect on the Gospel message which Christendom has had to offer, namely, that only the saintly few have the slightest prospect of heaven, and that all of the vast remainder of China's hundreds of millions and their forefathers are doomed to an eternity of torture.

But with all this handicap we found some Chinese Christians who gave every evidence of deep sincerity. Some foreigners, however, told us that they were merely "rice Christians." This may be true of some, but we feel sure it is not true of all—nor even of a majority. Comparing the native congregations with Christian gatherings in Europe and America, we have every reason to believe that the comparison favored the Chinese. They listen more respectfully, reverentially and earnestly than do the majority of congregations in Christian lands.

THE OUTLOOK

The outlook is both favorable and unfavorable. It is unfavorable in that China is now coming under the influence of Higher Criticism, Evolution, etc.—not from the missionaries, however, who seem to be more loyal to the Bible than are the ministers of Christendom. This flood of infidelity is coming from Japan.

The slowness of the Christian progress in China of late may be judged from the report of one Y. M. C. A. secretary from America. He said that in ten years the Association had succeeded in bringing only 25 persons into membership with the different Christian churches of all denominations. And the Y. M. C. A., be it remembered, is chiefly a moral club dominated by Christian influence—much the same as in Europe and America—and apparently the chief recruiting ground for the churches.

So far as we were able to sense the situation from the missionary viewpoint it is this: The influence of Christianity has brought a measure of enlightenment to the Chinese which led up to the recent revolution. The revolution itself is dominated by the Christian Chinese, partly because they are the more intelligent. The solid front which Chinese religions have heretofore maintained is breaking. Buddhism, Taoism and Confucianism still dominate the masses, but many are saying, We are non-sectarian; we take the best of all these religions and admit that there are good things also to be said respecting Christianity. The progressive Chinese of the revolutionist party proclaim that henceforth China shall be known as one of the Christian nations. By this they do not mean, however, that the Chinese will be converted to faith in Jesus as the *Redeemer* of the world and their personal Savior, but merely that China recognizes that the nations which call themselves Christian, are more wise, more intelligent, less superstitious, better educated and better warriors than the nations which recognize Buddhism, Brahminism, Taoism, Mohammedanism, etc. The statement, therefore, simply means that the Chinese propose to adopt Occidental manners and customs and, so far as possible, Occidental lines of thought.

DIFFICULTIES SHOULD BE PROMPTLY REMOVED

But while the psychological moment for the spread of Christianity would appear to have arrived, there is a difficulty. The Chinaman in perplexed by the 600 different denominations of Christians and the 600 different theories of salvation which they represent. Once awakened to thought he is more critical, if not more logical, than the masses of Christendom in respect to what he will accept instead of the doctrines he proposes to drop. He asks the missionaries all kinds of questions, the majority of which receive no satisfactory answer. One of the principal difficulties is on the subject of the Trinity—how there could be one God and he of three different persons, or how there could be three Gods and yet these three be only one person; and how the one God could be dead for three days and raise himself from the dead. The Chinese mind seems unable to grasp this mathematical problem.

As between the Protestant hell and the Catholic purgatory, the Chinaman is also perplexed. He wants to know where hell and purgatory are located, and who knows and how he knows. He seems perplexed to understand how a just and loving God should bring so many people into existence for such a fate. While Christianity appeals to them in some ways, it repels them along these lines; the poor Chinese are really in a quandary. The trend amongst the more thoughtful ones seem to be to consider all religions as more or less superstitions, useful merely for the control of the more degraded and vicious.

In view of these limitations, the missionaries now find it inexpedient to discuss doctrinal matters. Instead, the chief attention is given to schools, colleges, hospitals, Y. M. C. A. privileges, sports, etc. Their hope is that this beneficial influence may gradually attract more and more the Chinese, and that thus will spring up a preference for Chris-

tian methods and places of worship over and above those of other religions.

WHICH IS THE RIGHT SHIP?

One missionary likened the Christian church and its salvation to a large ship: The passengers board the vessel in confidence, trusting all to the officers, and do not study the maps, charts and compass nor inquire particularly respecting the machinery. So all desiring to be saved, he said, should get into the church and live and rest there contented, without inquiring particularly into doctrines, trusting implicitly to the final outcome.

But some of the hearers inquired, Which boat—which church? Are there not many Christian boats, Catholic and Protestant? Which one will surely be properly navigated and bring all of her passengers to the heavenly port?

Such knotty questions are, of course, perplexing to the missionaries, unused to such close reasonings in their own lands. We sympathize with the missionaries, realizing that they are in a very difficult situation. In conversation many of them manifested great earnestness and real piety and deplored their inability to accomplish greater results along religious lines. Others, a minority, we hope, seem to have a narrow and hypocritical spirit. Sent to convert the heathen they would like to make such reports as would please and not discourage those who sent them forth, especially in view of the fact that the Home Secretaries write them that donations are falling off and that encouraging reports must be made.

Much has been said respecting the fact that the missionaries live in palatial residences and hold themselves so aloof from the people whom they would interest that the latter discount all their professions of love and sympathy. Having heard such reports we sought to determine whether or not they were truthful, and, if so, the cause. We did find palatial residences of ministers in Hong Kong and Shanghai, but these were not, strictly speaking, missionaries who served the Chinese. These ministers serve and are chiefly supported by Americans, British, Germans, etc. (merchants, consuls, military officers, etc.). One of these serves the Union church in Shanghai at $2,400 gold ($4,800 Chinese money) per year. Of course, out of this he can well afford to live quite luxuriously in China. It is true that the missionaries also live in compounds, near the college buildings, separate entirely from the natives. These substantial structures, of course, must appear to the natives as palatial, greatly in contrast with their own hovels.

But we have not the heart to blame Western people for desiring to live according to their own standard when it is possible. No doubt some of them would serve with equal zeal if they had nowhere to lay their heads superior to the native house-boats on the river or the hovels on the shore. As one of them very frankly said, The constant din and hum of voices from earliest morning till latest night is very wearying upon the more delicate nervous systems of Caucasians and calculated to bring on nervous prostration, hence the better houses, purer air, better food, etc., may be considered almost in the light of necessities. Nor can we suppose that those who sent forth the missionaries and are paying their expenses desire them to live on the same level as the Chinese, even if their health would permit. On the whole, the average missionary seems to be doing in this respect about as faithfully as the majority of Christian people and Christian ministers in their home lands. So far as their clothing is concerned, we saw nothing that would be considered extravagant, even though much superior to the poor toggery of the majority of the natives.

THE RED CROSS SOCIETY

We have for years heard much of famines and consequent pestilences in China and these have usually been reported from practically the same district—the valley of the Yangtse River, which is navigable by large vessels for 900 miles. There is no doubt about the distress; many of the poor people are in a very pitable condition. This is the third year in succession in which they have suffered famine. Even the seed sown was lost by reason of the great freshets. It is safe to say that two millions are on the verge of starvation—many have already starved to death. Money and rice from America have been poured into this district time and time again, giving a moiety of relief, but the cause of the trouble remains—the river conditions.

The American Red Cross Society, organized for the preservation of life, and having as its President the Honorable William H. Taft, sent engineers to look into the difficulties and to confer with the Chinese Government respecting a permanent remedy. It has required time to make surveys and for engineers to decide what is necessary. The matter had reached a satisfactory conclusion and work was about to be begun when the revolution interrupted. It is anticipated that the new government will take the matter up. The engineer in charge, Mr. Jameson, informs us that he hopes to put to work speedily on the necessary improvements 30,000 of the destitute, and thus help a little in stemming the famine difficulties. While the matter is not under missionary auspices, it nevertheless has, in the minds of the Chinese, a missionary association and a helpful influence. Indeed, it is only along the lines of higher civilization that any considerable work can be accomplished now in China. Nevertheless, the Chinese are awakening and, like the Japanese, are wanting a new religion, rational as well as reverential. Is it not the same in Europe and America?

Pastor Russell addressed the natives on two occasions. Considerable interest was manifested and Chinese reports of both discourses were published, the publishers proposing to continue such publications weekly after the manner of the American and British newspapers. Something in his presentation seemed specially to strike interest and convince many of his hearers. In response to an offer of free reading matter in English, many addresses were handed in.

THE MORALS OF CHINA

The Chinese moral standard differs considerably from ours, but they apparently respect their own; there is no obtrusion of the nude and lewd. We saw no immodest dressing—nothing to suggest impurity or licentiousness. Mr. Lerrigo, Secretary of the Canton Y. M. C. A., informed us that the Chinese of the Association had recently purchased a moving-picture outfit, but that they immediately objected to the immodesty of some of the pictures, which would be thought all right in Europe and America. A censorship committee was appointed, and every picture in the slightest degree immodest is eliminated. In their Christian gatherings the sexes sit apart. When we sought for photographic views representing the Chinese, their customs and homes, we found them all modest, chaste. Vulgar, foolish and immodest pictures there were on sale, but they were of European manufacture, and apparently sold to Europeans and Americans. A missionary of thirty years' residence assured us that the moral status of the people in general is quite good, excepting that of the Buddhist priests.

UNITED STATES MISSIONS

Our visit to the Philippine Islands gave us a greatly increased respect for the American flag. The change wrought in the twelve years of American supervision of the Philippines is little short of a miracle. Little did we suppose that our Government had been carrying on so benevolent a work as we there beheld. True, it is not a missionary work in the proper sense of that term, in that it is not attempting to give the Filipinos religious instruction of any kind. Nevertheless, the work is very similar to that which all Foreign Missions are now attempting in Oriental countries—a work of education and moral and social uplift, etc. The officers and soldiers whom we met were a credit to the greatest nation in the world, including the Major General commanding the forces of the Philippines, the Civil Governor and those of the civil service officials with whom we became acquainted.

When our Government took over the control of these Islands from Spain there were thousands of Jesuits and Friars in the Islands in control of vast estates, but the people were ignorant. These friars still own 95 per cent. of the property within the walled city of Manila, we were told. The Government rents from them considerable property, paying $4,000 gold rent per year for one building alone. Nothing has been done by the United States Government against Catholicism; no Protestant denomination has been favored in any manner. Instead a thousand American teachers were imported, of whom 800 still remain. These are now supplemented by 6,000 native teachers. The Filipino thirst for education is rapidly increasing. The Legislature has recently determined upon the erection of 400 new school houses and the addition of many teachers. Do you have compulsory education? we inquired. The answer was, It is unnecessary; we cannot equip the schools rapidly enough as it is; we are obliged to run two shifts in order to accommodate those who are anxious to learn.

An up-to-date hospital has been erected; it is probably as complete as any hospital in the world, and its free dispensary has the distinction of being sixth in the world's record of cases treated in a year—80,000 cases last year.

Steam railways, electric railways, etc., with modern buildings and newly dredged harbor are rapidly increasing the business interests and lifting the people from serfdom and peonage to intelligence and good citizenship.

UNITED STATES TREATING FILIPINOS AS AN ELDER BROTHER

To give an idea of the progress made, we note the fact that at a meeting addressed by Pastor Russell there were present about 1,000 Filipino young men, ages from 18 to 30, who understand English, and who gave the very closest attention. Following the address some 300 applications for literature were voluntarily handed to Pastor Russell. This is in keeping with the general manifestation of this people for knowledge along every line. Another indication of their progress was manifested recently. A proposal was made that a Y. M. C. A. for Filipinos be established. The American Central Committee made an offer of $140,000, provided the Filipinos of Manila themselves would raise $80,000. The amount was more than subscribed—$100,000 was contributed.

To our surprise, the Governor General and others assured us that all of these improvements are being made by the Filipinos themselves—at their own cost. The United States Government merely supervises the matter through its representatives. The judges, physicians, nurses, teachers, schools, are all paid out of Filipino funds under our Government's wise and economical management of their affairs; as an elder brother doing for a younger. We felt proud indeed of the record. When we contrasted the results here manifested and the benevolent methods used with the selfish exploiting practices only too common, we thanked God that whatever the blemishes of our Government and whatever its shortcomings, it has a record for justice second to none ever made in this world's history, and that without hypocrisy.

This fairness manifested by our Government is telling upon the Filipinos, who at first misunderstood. It is also influencing the large number of Chinese residing there. Indeed, the whole world is taking notice; but alas! we fear that no colonizing nation is ready to follow the example. The peoples of the Orient are practical and nothing could much more commend to them the principles of Christianity than our Government's course. Quite to the contrary, the operations and exploitations of European governments have given the missionaries a very uphill work in what they have sought to do. The very fact that these exploiting governments have backed up and protected the missionaries has had, we believe, an influence derogatory to missions.

THE MALAY PENINSULA

Your Committee visited Singapore and Penang and had interesting and profitable experiences. The greatest missionary effort in both places appeared to be under Methodist control. The work being done in these two Malayan centers reminded us very much of what we have already mentioned respecting the work in progress in the Philippine Islands. Like that, it seemed to be chiefly a work of secular education, and quite successful, although conducted along different lines. The Government subsidizes the schools liberally, besides which a tuition fee is charged. In these respects we believe the work less successful than that in the Philippines where the education is free, and where the Government provides the schools and teachers and cannot supply them rapidly enough.

These Methodist schools in Singapore and Penang, so far as we were able to learn, have 2,500 and 2,000 pupils respectively in attendance, and with Government subsidization, are self-supporting. These pupils are attracted from all parts of the Peninsula, and some from Siam and Sumatra, across the Straits. Naturally the expenses attaching to these scholarships must reduce the number in attendance and confine it to the comparatively better-off classes. In the Philippines, on the contrary, the free schools and their teachers are scattered everywhere, and all people, rich and poor, have educational opportunities. While, therefore, we highly commend the work being done here, we still believe that the American plan is the superior one. It is astonishing to note how anxious the peoples of these parts seem to be to gain an education.

Inquiry respecting Christianity amongst the students revealed the fact that a certain amount of religious matter is introduced daily, in that the sessions are opened with prayer, and some of the simpler Bible stories and parables are brought to the attention of the pupils. Of course, only a small proportion of the entire attendance at these schools ever take the full course of instruction, but we are informed that one-quarter of those who do graduate profess Christianity, as preferable to the religion of their birth, although they do not very generally join any of the Christian churches. We were glad to learn that here, as well as in China, prejudice against Christianity is rapidly breaking down, and that the Chinese who predominate here prefer American and English teachers rather than their own. Indeed, they are quite willing to pay good salaries for competent teachers, who are in demand.

We did not have favorable opportunities for contact with the native Christians, who are of many nationalities. We learned with pleasure, however, that while they are few in number, they give evidence of sincerity. Other denominations were represented as active, but in a much smaller way, and much less successful than the work noted.

CHRISTIAN INFLUENCE IN INDIA

For centuries India has been a missionary field—particularly the southern portion, and the Island of Ceylon adjacent. Tradition has it that St. Thomas, one of the twelve Apostles, visited Ceylon and Madras. A cathedral to his memory stands in Madras, covering, it is claimed, his grave. The legend is quite specific. We were shown the cave where he was attacked by the Brahmins, but from which he escaped. About two miles from it is what is termed Mt. Saint Thomas. This is the place where, supposedly, he was speared to death by a Brahmin. Of course, these incidentals may have belonged to some other man by the name of Thomas, and centuries of time may have confounded him with the Apostle Thomas. But that some man by the name of Thomas, a Christian Missionary, visited those parts long ago could scarcely be questioned.

Additional tradition shows that at a very early period Syrian Christians made a settlement on the southwest coast. They still maintain an organization, and a church history running back from twelve to fifteen hundred years, and they now number about a quarter of a million in the Province of Travancore, whose population is about three millions.

The London Missionary Society, a Congregational institution, has carried on a work in Travancore since 1806. They claim now a church membership of ten thousand. Although Travancore is one of the smallest of the India Provinces, we have given it prominence because Christian missionary effort here appears to have reached a better development than elsewhere, so far as we could discern. The natives are very poor, but industrious, and apparently honest-hearted. The higher castes, which adhere to Hinduism, seem not averse to Christianity, but reject it, because to them it seems less logical than their own beliefs. The natives from the lower castes, reached by the Gospel message, have certainly been blessed above their fellows still remaining under the grosser superstitions and idolatry of Hinduism.

Northward from Travancore and Madras we found evidences of missionary activity, but they were newer and their successful work correspondingly less in evidence. We were pleased, however, to note that some amongst the natives in all parts give evidence of great sincerity and Christian devotion to the extent of their knowledge of the Lord and his Word. These, however, of course, are very isolated cases, just as this class of Christians is scarce in every part of the world.

METHODS EMPLOYED TO INTEREST NATIVES

Various are the methods used by the Missionaries to gain a hold upon the people of India, and to lift them from idolatry and superstition. The college appears to be the most attractive bait. There is a thirst for knowledge, even though it be less in India than could be wished for. In only one locality did we hear of children being hired to attend school by the payment of a trifling sum. We were told that for this inducement the parents would compel the attendance of the children, but not without it. In various parts of India there are academies and colleges controlled by the Missionaries. These are attractive to the young men, because of the educational facilities. The students are not required to make any profession of Christianity in joining the schools, but rather are assured that no attempt will be made to indoctrinate them. The students, we are advised, come largely from the upper Brahmin caste, influence with which is much coveted by the Missionaries.

Inquiry as to how Christian interest was sustained amongst these young men brought the answer that the majority, after graduating, scoff at Christianity, and claim a superiority for Hinduism. They seem to catch in the schools the spirit of "Higher Criticism." We cannot surely tell the mental attitude of these young men when they enter the schools, because we know that the influence of the schooling in the colleges in Christendom tends to similar unbelief in the Bible. Inquiry respecting the status of the Protestant Missionaries on the subject of faith in the Bible brought the report that many of them are Higher Critics and Evolutionists, who no longer believe in the Bible as the inspired Word of God. It seems to be conceded, however, that higher critical teachings are not conveyed to the scholars in a public

manner, but rather, as is the case in Christendom, covertly.

We found evidence of very sincere Christian endeavor on the part of the Missionaries in the past, with some fruitage in consecrated natives. We found the Missionaries of the present time earnest and attentive to their work, but, like ministers of Christendom, they seem to have had their spirituality sapped, devitalized, and, probably, by the same influences—"Higher-Critical-Infidel-Evolutionary" theories. Only one missionary did we hear of preaching eternal torture, and he was a new arrival on the field. Contact with "heathendom" seems to fully settle in the minds of all reasoning people that God never intended the eternal torture of all except the comparatively few who put their trust in the redemptive work of Jesus, and subsequently to walk in his steps.

SINCERITY OF MANY NATIVES EVIDENT

On every hand may be seen evidences that the poor Hindus are as sincere at heart in their worship as any Christian could possibly be. There is not the slightest sign that the devotions of the majority of hypocritical—"to be seen of men." Although their devotions are performed publicly, fearlessly, they are reverential and seem to be addressed to some unseen god, even though crude idols are at times apparently used to represent him, according to a philosophy which we are unable to appreciate. However, when we remember the terrible mental pictures of the Almighty drawn by some of our creeds, and contrasted these with the ugly idols worshipped by some of these poor peoples, we felt inclined to say that of the two the creed idol was the more repulsive.

The Salvation Army has recently entered the missionary lists in India. Its sympathetic method of mingling with and aiding the lowest caste to better ideas of home-life and cleanliness is commendable. If only their fifes and drums called the people to hear of God's love, and the good tidings of his provision for all in Messiah's kingdom, what good they might accomplish! They are making quite a show of success by attraction to their service young teachers, "catechists," from other missions, by more liberal allowances for their expenses.

MORE THAN EDUCATION NEEDED TO LIFT NATIVES OUT OF SUPERSTITION

At Benares we had a Christian native for a guide, and he informed us that many of the poor people who were bathing in Ganges, and hoping thereby to wash away their sins, had been educated, some of them in Christian schools, so that quite a good many of them were conversant with the English language. This surely was a very discouraging discovery. It indicated that even more than education is necessary to lift these people out of their deep-seated superstitions.

Missionaries and Christianity have frequently been blamed with doing injury to the people. Many say, "You can trust a native who has not professed Christianity, but beware lest you ever trust one who has been Christianized—they are not dependable." It may be that something connected with Missionary effort promotes dishonesty in those who receive its benefits, but in our opinion the Missionaries and their methods are less to be blamed than the Europeans residing in India and transient visitors. Apparently the more consecrated people of Christendom remain at home. There can be no doubt that the influence of the white man in a general way upon the people of India has to a considerable extent been demoralizing, and this demoralizing influence, exercised by representatives of Christendom, seems to more than counteract the helpful influences of the Bible and the Missionaries. The natives of lower castes look up to the whites, but find their disgraces easier to copy than their graces.

In Madras we became acquainted with a native Christian worker who was conducting a temperance mission. We remarked that we had been greatly surprised to find the natives quite free from the influence of intoxicating liquors, and that we were surprised at his having a Temperance Mission. He said that his labors were chiefly against the young natives who were influenced by Christianity, and who were rapidly becoming addicted to intoxicating liquors. We learned also that amongst the Mohammedans there is a class increasingly numerous which, following the example of the whites, are becoming skeptical of religion and correspondingly dissolute in their habits. As for the whites, nearly all seem to use liquors and tobacco. The irreligion and nominalism of the majority of the whites discount greatly all missionary efforts.

A REVIEW OF THE COMMITTEE'S TOUR

The Committee traveled in India about four thousand miles together—by railway, bullock-carts, automobiles, pony-carts, jinrickshas, carriages, etc.

From the Straits of Malay our party came to the Island of Ceylon. We had some interesting experiences in its chief city, Colombo. A number of Bible students of that place met us on our arrival, and gave us hearty greetings of welcome. Our fellowship with them was sweet, and three of them subsequently accompanied us for a few days through the Travancore District of India. Here in Colombo a meeting had been arranged for in the Public Hall, to be addressed by Pastor Russell. Although the hour appointed was early, the house was crowded, about 900 being present. Close attention was given, and at the conclusion of the meeting many addresses were handed in for literature on Biblical topics.

Another interesting experience worth relating was a visit by the Committee to the Lepers' Hospital on an island adjoining the city. The hospital is presided over by an educated Indian of the Parsee faith, who with great cordiality arranged for Pastor Russell to give an address (through an interpreter) to the lepers. Many heard with interest, and amongst them some inquired for literature.

TRAVANCORE PROVINCE—INDIA

A full week was given to southwest India, and it was worthy of it. Our first stop was at Russell-Purim, the principal point at which Brother Davey for two years has let shine the "Gospel of the kingdom." Pastor Russell preached there twice through interpreters to audiences variously estimated from two to five thousand. Nearly two miles from the meeting place we were met by a thousand of the natives who escorted us to a hastily improvised auditorium. A fife and drum corps preceded us, while behind us came bagpipes, tom-toms and various musical instruments unknown to us. Many of those who met us carried banners of welcome and marched ahead of our motor car, while on either side were lined up others who greeted us, singing native hymns of welcome. Our Committee was quite unprepared for such a reception, and in the general din could merely express our appreciation by bowing to the multitudes who walked and ran before, beside and behind us to the meeting place, constantly joined by other hundreds on the way, and finally by thousands who were waiting for us at the auditorium.

When we stepped upon the platform each member of the Committee was presented with a garland of flowers, strung after the native style. These were hung about our necks. To each of us was presented also a bouquet of flowers, handsomely arranged in a manner which, we were informed, to the natives signified peace, love and good will. Next came fans and a glass of coocanut milk. It was following these experiences and refreshments that Pastor Russell gave his address. Following the first address we were introduced to some of the officials of the vicinity.

NAGERCOIL—MISSION CENTER

Our next stop was at Nagercoil, where the London Missionary Society has a college. We were kindly received by the Secretary in charge, and, as per arrangements made in advance, Pastor Russell delivered an address. The auditorium was crowded, as were the doors and windows, while hundreds were unable to get within hearing distance. Natives constituted the audience, except the white teachers. Amongst them, we were informed, were educated Hindus and well as Christians, and nearly all were men.

TRIVANDUM—THE CAPITAL

The next stop was at Trivandum, the capital of Travancore. Two meetings were held in Victoria City Hall, which on both occasions was crowded to overflowing. We cannot know to what extent the hearers received the message. It was quite manifest, however, from their conduct, that some of the Hindus had come to sneer at anything Christian. It was equally manifest that by the time of the close of the meeting most of this disposition had faded away; the faces were earnest—many of them markedly sincere. They heard the Bible defended and Christianity upheld with more of an appeal than ever before, to the Bible, as well as to reason. Nearly 200 requested literature, expressing a desire to study further the matter which they had heard—some of them expressing deep concern.

Five other less important places were visited and meetings held ere

WE REACHED MADRAS

In Madras we had very interesting experiences also. Three meetings were held in different localities, all of them crowded. Nearly three hundred applications for literature were handed in. It was while in this vicinity that we visited the Mount of Saint Thomas, where, according to tradition, the Apostle Thomas, as before referred to, suffered martyrdom by a spear-thrust at the hands of a Brahmin.

THE VIZAGAPATAM MISSION

We had an interesting visit to Vizagapatam, which has a mission now under the control of the Canadian Baptists, having been transferred to them by the London Missionary Society. A public meeting was held in the chapel and we attended. The missionary and his wife were present, and also two men and two women, native teachers or workers. It was Quarterly Meeting Day, and about six boys and six girls repeated Scripture verses, committed to memory, in the presence of an audience of about forty adults. These missionaries and teachers—yea, and all missionaries—have the sympathy of the Committee, for we realize that they have a difficult proposition—an impossible one, so far as the conversion of the world is concerned.

CALCUTTA—CITY OF PALACES

Some of us journeyed from Madras to Calcutta, while another passed through the Mysore District to Bombay. All of our experiences were interesting. We were impressed with the fact that while the natives respect the whites as a superior race, they are perplexed with some of their religious teachings, and inclined to think that many professing Christianity are only partially sincere in professing such beliefs—for instance, Mohammedans cannot receive the "Doctrine of the Trinity." They accept our Old Testament Scriptures, but declare that these forbid the worship of any one but the one God. They therefore oppose Christians preaching that there are three gods, even as they oppose the Hindus for preaching that there are five thousand gods.

All (Hindus and Mohammedans) are perplexed that these superior whites should insist on justice, kindness and love and yet teach that the Creator is devoid of these qualities—that he foreordained their forefathers to an eternity of torture, well knowing what he was doing, and that he has allowed ignorance to prevail while demanding knowledge and faith as a basis for salvation. They say, What we already believe seems to us more reasonable that this. We have some bad gods of our own, but none of them are so vicious as the Christian God is represented to be. We also have kind and generous gods and merciful gods, and these teach us that we must be kind and generous toward each other and towards even the brute beasts. Why, they ask, should we leave our own faith, which is older than yours, to accept your views, which are less reasonable, just and loving than our own?

RELIGION NOT GENERALLY TAUGHT

Of course, missionaries find it very difficult to answer such propositions. One result is that little is said about the future punishment of unbelievers, etc. If much were said on these subjects, Hindu children would not be allowed to attend the schools. To maintain a hold upon the children, to be able to make interesting reports of the progress of their work, and to seemingly justify their continuance in the work, the pupils must be held on to. Religious instruction is generally avoided, except at times, when it is optional with the pupils to attend.

Another matter connected with the schools should be mentioned: Of late years, the Government has been fostering education by giving liberal allowances to schools of a satisfactory curriculum. But the Government requires that such schools, aided out of the public treasury, shall be non-religious. The various mission schools of practically all denominations are now competing for such Government patronage—to compensate for the falling off of missionary donations. As a consequence these mission schools are non-religious—purely secular—with merely a Christian influence attaching, and, as already noted, this Christian influence is of late vitiated and neutralized by an unbelief in the Bible, the fruitage of "Higher-Criticism-Evolutionary" theories.

The critics of the Christian religion, are, of course, mainly from the upper castes. Those of the lower castes wonder much, understand little, and seem to be in expectation of harsh language and ill treatment, both from the whites and the higher castes of Indians. In all of our journeyings we were impressed with the gentleness of the people as a whole, and the evident affection of parents for their children. Only amongst those who have been closely associated with the whites did we find the quarreling and wrangling disposition.

In Calcutta two meetings were held, addressed by Pastor Russell. Although the attendance was not large, the interest was considerable, as evidenced by the fact that 170 handed in their names and addresses for literature.

We were informed that the advertising implied that only the whites were invited, and if the natives had known that they would have been welcome, crowds would have been turned away.

BENARES—"THE HOLY CITY"

Benares was our next stopping point. It is the Mecca of India. As a city it is said to be sacred to more people of different religions than any other city on earth. No attempt was made to hold a meeting here. The people seem more ignorant and superstitious than at any other point visited. The principal interest here, aside from the temples, which we did not visit, were the bathing ghats along the shore of the Ganges river. They go down the steps into the water, which to them is sacred; they bathe, pray the while, and finally, before leaving, many of them fill little vessels with the "sacred" water, which they carry home with them. It was particularly saddening and discouraging to be told by a native Christian that many who go thither to bathe have had contact with Christianity and modern education. It reminded us of the saying of a Missionary in Japan, namely, that one of the most discouraging features of his work was that some of the members of his congregation who had professed Christianity for years, nevertheless went annually to the Shinto temple to worship their ancestors.

LUCKNOW—CAWNPORE—AGRA, ETC.

These places were interesting, each in its way, but less so than places already described, with nothing specially worthy of noting.

BOMBAY, THE BEAUTIFUL

Our experiences at Bombay closed this most interesting tour through India. Here Pastor Russell addressed two very intelligent audiences, composed partially of whites, the remainder being of high caste natives. Some stood and many, desirous of hearing, were unable to gain admission. Here again many requests for literature were handed in.

The next day on the pier, as we were departing for Egypt, an educated native of the Parsee caste, who had accepted Christianity, came to bid us good by, bringing with him a long garland of flowers of sweet odor, which he hung about Pastor Russell's shoulders, and presenting him at the same time with a very handsome bouquet in the form of a scepter. He declared himself under lasting obligations for the assistance in the understanding of God's Word afforded by the meeting of the night previous. He also handed in his address for literature.

CONCLUDING THOUGHTS ON INDIA

From the foregoing it will be noted that in the Committee's estimation the true Christianity has made more advancement in the Province of Travancore than in any other. We believe the readers of this report will feel a special interest in the people of that Province. We tried to think of some little souvenir of that Province, and found one which, we believe, will be generally interesting. It is the smallest coin used in Travancore, and probably one of the smallest in value in the world, about one-tenth of a cent each. Yet in one sense of the word it is the basis of all monetary value, for it is called "cash."

We have brought with us several thousand of these from the Travancore mint—new. They are for the International Bible Students Association classes. Each class desiring these souvenirs should, through its secretary, send to the Brooklyn office a list of names of its members desiring one coin each; thus each class may be served at a sending—saving trouble and expense. These souvenirs will be sent free, postpaid.

With deep gratitude to God for the privileges and lessons connected with this world-tour of Mission Investigation, we conclude our Report with a Categorical Summary, which notes the questions given us for our guidance, and our answers thereto following each.

THE CATEGORICAL SUMMARY

I.—"Are Foreign Missions conducted along Christian business lines?"

Ans.—As these terms are generally understood, Yes.

II.—"To what extent are the methods used successful in reaching the heathen peoples, and in bringing them to Christianity?"

Ans.—The success attained by Missionaries is small. We found Oriental Christians about as sincere, intelligent and earnest as the average of church attendants in America and Europe; and, as there, a very few who gave evidence of being consecrated to God and his service.

But, viewing the question from the standpoint of the present and future, rather than the past, our Report is different. The present methods cannot be called successful, because Christianizing endeavors seem pretty generally to have ceased! Present missionary endeavors are almost exclusively along the lines of secular education. Although this is not Christianizing work, it is, of course, a good work, for the poor Orientals surely need education.

In your Committee's opinion, however, there is less need for Academic and Collegiate education, such as the Missionaries forward, than for Common Schooling. The Oriental, after obtaining higher education, is spoiled for the common affairs of life about him, and aspires only to teaching, clerkship and office holding, which are over-supplied. Unable to get such employment, he is in trouble. He will not dig, and to beg he is ashamed. But the general Common School education, your Committee believes, could best be done by the Government, and along unsectarian lines, after the method followed by the United States of America in its supervision of the Philippine Islands. Christians, of course, would be the best for teachers.

III—"What are the teachings, and what are the inducements to accept Christianity, and how enduring are the results?"

Answer.—There are evidences of positive teachings in the past, but there is very little religious teaching now being done, because the people would resent it, and keep their children from the schools. We heard of instances where a small coin per day was given to each child attending school; but, aside from the schooling, the inducements offered by the Missionaries are chiefly social and medical.

Of late the natives are more and more averse to a public avowal of Christianity, because with increasing intelligence come doubts. The tendency of the times in the Orient, as in the Occident, is toward unbelief in any religion. If a Missionary falls from faith in the Bible into "Higher-Criticism-Infidelity," he may continue his office and profession. But the Orientals have no such inducements to outwardly profess that they no longer believe (except for native teachers). Besides these Orientals are very honest in respect to their religious professions, except where spoiled by contact with the hypocrisy of the whites.

IV.—"What is the attitude of heathendom toward the Missionaries, and toward Christianity, and what is the prospect of Foreign Missions becoming self-supporting?"

Answer.—The Orientals are remarkably tolerant of all religions, but are often perplexed at the Missionary competition and opposition of Christian denominations. The higher castes consider the medley of Christian doctrines presented to them less philosophical than their own. Their own, however, is not satisfactory, they confess. But before exchanging for another they want to know that the change will be for the better. The common conception, that all the peoples of India, China and Japan are heathen savages, is very erroneous. Their upper classes, or castes, include some splendid characters of truly noble manhood, the moral and intellectual peers of Europeans and Americans. Indeed, the masses of these people are less vicious, less rude, more kind and considerate than are the masses of Europe and America. Drunkenness and outward immodesty are almost entirely unknown amongst the Orientals.

Many of the congregations of Christians in Japan, China and India are self-sustaining. And in such cases the Orientals prefer to take over the full control of all services, rather than to have the Missionaries take any part. The native ministers come closer to the people than it is possible for the whites to do. Habits and customs of life make it almost impossible for Missionaries to live in the very simple style of the Orientals, and it would not be reasonable to require it.

V.—"What, if any, change should be made in the teachings and financial administration to make the foreign Mission work more successful?"

Answer.—The great change necessary to make Missionary work more successful is for the Missionaries to have and to impart to the people a more logical Gospel. To preach to the millions of the Orient that God foreordained them to ignorance of the true religion, and condemned all the generations of their forefathers, on account of that ignorance, to an eternity of torture is not logical, not loving, not just—not Gospel at all, when we remember that the word Gospel means "good-tidings of great joy which shall be to all people." The Missions would be much more successful in reaching the hearts of those they would serve if they presented the Gospel of God's loving provision of Messiah's coming kingdom.

Although the doctrine of the Trinity corresponds considerably with the teachings of the Hindu religion, it is, nevertheless, difficult for those of other religions to fully accept it. They cannot understand the matter of three Gods in one person, as some put it; or three persons in one God, as others put it. There is a simplicity and honesty about these people that is commendable, and which refuses to confess that which they do not understand. The message of Messiah's coming kingdom, in which God's will shall be done on earth, even as it is done in heaven, would, we believe, appeal to large and increasing numbers of Orientals.

VI.—"What hope is there for the conversion of the world during the present generation, through the Laymen's Foreign Missionary Movement, with their proposed thirty million dollars?"

Answer.—No one who knows anything of Oriental conditions would have the least expectation of the world's conversion during this present generation through the use of the thirty million dollars proposed. Nor, indeed, if the sum were a thousand times that. We would not, however, discourage the giving of money for Missions. Those who give will be benefited by so doing, and undoubtedly every million spent benevolently in Oriental lands will help to bring in the more extravagant civilization of the West. It will increase the wants of the natives, and thus promote commerce. As for promoting vital Christianity, we all know that this is not a purchasable commodity.

As to whether the Western civilization will really advantage the East is a question. The Orientals, economical and industrious, are also contented, which is more than can be said of their more favored brethren of the West. Nor can we claim that our Western civilization would make them more honest and more truthful.

The very suggestion of the conversion of the world is ridiculous to the peoples of the East—including the Missionaries. One Methodist minister frankly said, "I had to come here and see for myself, before I dropped the idea of the world's conversion, and the twin idea that all the unconverted would suffer endless torture."

VII.—"To what extent do the monies donated benefit the heathen, and could any improvement along this line be suggested?"

Answer.—Our judgment is that that portion of money contributed to Foreign Missions, which reaches heathen lands, is wisely enough used for its intended purposes. Whatever waste there is would seem rather to be in the machinery of collections. One collector for such benevolent institutions told us that he was allowed, as his salary, one-half of all that he collected. We know not to what extent this principle obtains with other Societies. Each Society owes to itself to institute a very thorough investigation into its own affairs, and to ascertain what proportion of the funds received is ever forwarded to the Missionaries.

Nothing in these remarks applies in any degree to the Association under whose auspices this Committee went forth. It is well known by us all that the International Bible Students Assn. is conducted along most economical lines, and that all services in the home office are gratuitous.

We know nothing to suggest, except that the true Gospel of salvation be preached—the Gospel of the kingdom of Messiah. Wherever Pastor Russell preached the soon coming of Messiah's kingdom to "bless all the families of the earth," all classes heard with keen interest. He quotes Scriptures relating to the coming "Golden Age," the lifting of the veil of ignorance and manifesting God's love to all men, including those now sleeping in death. It seemed good to Mohammedans, Hindus, Buddhists, Confucians—all. Many desired him to stay longer, but his time was limited; instead he promised them literature, for which they eagerly handed in their addresses.

Your Committee found no time in which to visit Burmah, Africa and Australia, and suggest that it might be wise to send another Committee to investigate those fields.

In harmony with your suggestions, Pastor Russell arranged for the publication of free literature in the six principal languages of India, viz.: Hindustani, Guiarati, Malayami, Tulugu, Marotti and Tamil. This work is already under way, as is also a similar work of the Chinese and Japanese. The entire cost of producing three million copies, and circulating them through willing natives, will, he believes, be kept within the seven thousand dollars authorized by the Association.

In conclusion, your Committee assure you that they have done their very best to accomplish the purpose of their appointment. They thank the Lord, and also the Association, for the great privileges enjoyed in connection with the service.

C. T. Russell, Pres. Adj.-Gen'l W. P. Hall
F. H. Robison, Sec'y J. T. D. Pyles
E. W. V. Kuehn R. B. Maxwell
Dr. Leslie W. Jones

THE COMMITTEE HOMEWARD BOUND

Leaving India the Committee journeyed via Suez, stopping two days at Cairo. A visit was made to the Great Pyramid, whose wonderful Passages tell by their construction so much of the divine plan that it has been called the Stone Bible. We need not here give space to an explanation of the meaning of the passages and their wonderful lessons, so in harmony with the prophecies of the Bible, because the majority of our readers already have this as one of the Chapters in the Third Volume of the STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES. We do, however, urge all to a fresh reading of this testimony, so helpful to faith.

On the second day an excursion was made to the ruins of Memphis, the ancient capital of Egypt in Joseph's time, when he was next to Pharaoh in authority. Many of the scenes brought freshly to mind the Scripture narrative respecting Joseph, and later on respecting the finding of Moses in the rushes of the Nile. The land of Goshen, where the Israelites spent two centuries, and from which they were miraculously delivered, the place of their possible crossing the Red Sea, the wells of Moses, and the bitter waters of Marah on the opposite shore, were noticed.

ATHENS AND MARS HILL

Next we visited Athens, made famous through the visit of St. Paul eighteen centuries ago. There we visited the Stadium, where Socrates and other orators of ancient Greece held large audiences by their eloquence. We thought, too, of the fickleness of public applause, as we viewed the ancient prison in which he died. Other items of interest at Athens were the wonderful Temple and the great Amphitheatre, with a seating capacity of forty thousand, recently remodeled after its original style, in marble. But the ruins of the greatness of ancient Greece, grand as they were, led our minds still more particularly to the great Apostle St. Paul. We considered that his monuments in the New Testament writings are more eloquent a thousand times than all the achievements of all the philosophers, poets and artists of the whole period of Greece's fame. We climbed to Mars Hill, traversing quite probably the same steps, cut in the natural rocks, by which the Apostle ascended and descended. We went to a platform in the rocks above, and near to the old market house mentioned in the Scriptures, and surmised that St. Paul spoke to the people from that very spot. Our little company while on Mars Hill engaged in a short service of praise and prayer, and Pastor Russell gave a little sermonette re the Gospel which St. Paul preached—Jesus and the resurrection—Jesus, the Redeemer and Savior; the resurrection, the method by which a divine blessing will come through Jesus to all the families of the earth.

We noted that as the doctrine of the resurrection was scoffed at by the ancient Greeks, so the worldly-wise of today are still inclined to stumble over it and to mock and say, "We will hear thee again of this matter—enough for the present."

Two public meetings were held in one of the principal auditoriums of Athens, addressed by Pastor Russell. On both occasions many were turned away, while others were obliged to stand. Many heard the Gospel of the Two Salvations for the first time:—

(1) The present call and development of the "elect," the consummation of whose hope will be in the glorious change of the first resurrection.

(2) The restitution blessing then to be brought to the world in general with full opportunity for all the willing and obedient to return to human perfection and a world-wide Eden and everlasting life—rejectors being destroyed in the second death.

Our experiences at Corinth were interesting. We were shown the ruins of ancient Corinth, which have recently been uncovered. We walked about some of the very market places and fountains visited by St. Paul, and probably upon the very stones. St. Paul's Cathedral, a fine, modern structure, is the City's memorial to the great Apostle. The Cathedral is Greek Catholic—or rather Greek Christian, for so the natives prefer to speak of themselves.

Here, at the request of the Mayor and the Ecclesiastics, Pastor Russell gave two addresses of about an hour and a half each. They were well received. The reasonableness of the presentations and deductions and the harmony of the same with the Bible seemed to be the general comment of the people, many of whom seemed hungry for a clearer knowledge of God's Word and a surer foundation for their faith. Here as well as at Athens many addresses were handed in with requests for reading matter.

Brief stops were made at two places in France, where several semi-private conferences were held with Bible Students. The following Sunday brought us to London, where a most interesting and profitable week was spent. Pastor Russell delivered eight addresses in London and nearby—four of these were in the London Tabernacle.

NEW YORK HIPPODROME MASS MEETING

TO HEAR I. B. S. A. COMMITTEE'S REPORT ON MISSIONS

Less than a week brought us safely across the Atlantic on the Cunarder "Mauretania." Here we received a most hearty welcome, which culminated on Sunday in a mass meeting of Christian people at the New York Hippodrome.

The Hippodrome, with a seating capacity of fifty-two hundred, had been secured for the Committee's report on March 31, 3 p. m. Crowds were at the entrances waiting for admission at 1:30 o'clock. Before 3 o'clock every seat was taken, and subsequently hundreds were turned away disappointed. No better evidence than this of the interest of the public and of Bible Students of all denominations could be asked.

The crowds entering beheld with bated breath the entire platform, or stage, over a hundred feet wide, banked with beautiful floral evergreen plants, etc., etc. We learned afterwards that it required eighteen men to unwrap and place these floral tributes—from 4 a. m. until noon. The decoration was a master-work, both as respects the materials and their arrangement. It was declared the most beautiful floral display of the kind ever seen in the American Metropolis. The Chairman, referring to the flowers, remarked that they had come from Bible Students of twenty-one different States of the Union addressed to the Pastor and with greetings to himself and to the Committee. The central feature of the display was a large cross of red carnations circled by a crown of yellow daffodils and surrounded by a circular wreath-work of dark green leaves in which were scattered beautiful white lilies.

The Hon. J. F. Rutherford of the New York Bar served as Chairman. He introduced Prof. F. H. Robison, who read to the audience the categorical summary which constitutes the conclusion of their report, explaining that the full report would be printed, as we here have it.

Pastor Russell followed with a discourse from the text, "Ask of me and I will give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession." (Psa. 2:8) It will be unnecessary for us to give a synopsis of this, as Bible Students in all parts of England and America have already had opportunity to read it in the more than one thousand newspapers which publish the Pastor's sermons every week.

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WHY CHRIST AROSE FROM THE DEAD

"If Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain and your faith also vain; yea, and we are found false witnesses of God. . . . Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished."—1 Cor. 15:14, 15, 18.

The faith once delivered to the saints by Jesus and the Apostles in respect to the resurrection of the dead has been very generally lost. Christian people profess a belief in the resurrection, because they find it stated in the Bible, yet they are continually in difficulty in their endeavor to make the Scriptural teaching on the subject square with some of the unscriptural theories received into the church, and incorporated into many of the creeds during the "dark ages."

St. Paul warned the church against these human philosophies, and called them "science, falsely so-called," which makes void the Word of God. These errors have been instrumental in dividing the faith of God's people into six hundred denominations, with six hundred different professions. If God's people could all come back to the simplicity of the Bible's teaching in respect to the resurrection of the dead, all of these differences would speedily disappear. God's Word would be seen to be

beautiful and harmonious, satisfactory to the consecrated intellect, as none of our sectarian creeds are.

Really the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead has been repudiated by all denominations, not willingly, not intentionally, but perforce, as it were. An opposite theory received and intrenched in the minds gives no place for the doctrine of the resurrection, as the Bible presents it. Consequently we have twisted the doctrine of the resurrection and recite, "I believe in the resurrection of the body."

Yet even this perverted view of the resurrection is not satisfactory to those who hold it. They wish many a time that the doctrine of the resurrection were not in the Bible, so much difference does it cause. For instance, how inconsistent it seems that they should say, "I believe in the resurrection of the body," and then say, as many do, Dying is but going home, getting rid of the mortal flesh, and being freed from its limitations. If it is a blessing to die and get free from the limitations of the body, how could it be a blessing to be reincarcerated in the body, and be obliged to keep it through all eternity? Such is the inconsistency of the resurrection, however, from the viewpoint of the creeds of men.

THE BIBLE RESURRECTION REASONABLE

There is nothing inconsistent in the Bible presentation of the resurrection. Not from the Bible, but from men, comes the suggestion of the resurrection of the body. The Bible invariably refers to the resurrection of the soul. It is the soul that dies; as we read, "The soul that sinneth, it shall die." Adam was created a living soul, but his living soul came under the death sentence because he disobeyed God. It was his soul that was redeemed from death, not his body. "I will redeem thy life from destruction."—Psalm 103:4.

To accomplish this redemption, we read that Christ Jesus "poured out his soul unto death"; "he made his soul an offering for sin." Moreover, we are particularly told that it was the soul of Jesus that was raised from the dead: "Thou wilt not leave my soul in sheol." St. Peter quotes this statement as prophetical of the resurrection of Jesus, that his soul was not left in hades; God raised Jesus from the dead on the third day. With what body do the dead come? is a totally different question. Some dead souls, in the resurrection, will come forth with spirit bodies, and others with human bodies, according to the Bible. But the important part is, that it is the soul, the being, that comes forth, that is resurrected—not the body. If the soul dies, as the Bible declares, then manifestly the soul should be resurrected.

The difficulty with us has been that we "have made void the Word of God" by our "traditions." We received from the Grecian philosophers a tradition which Socrates and Plato both advocated, namely, that when a human being dies he does not really die. The soul, it is claimed, cannot die, but, whenever the soul gets out of the body, the body dies. How strange it seems that we all, as intelligent, thoughtful beings, have accepted this heathen philosophy, without a word of Scripture for its support, and with hundreds of Scriptures to condemn it!

We can see how the heathen philosophers might be led to conjure up such a theory, because of their desire to believe in a future life, and because they had no revelation from God respecting a future life. They therefore tried their best to convince themselves that man really does not die—that no man can die. The Bible theory is the very reverse of this, namely, that a man does die; that he is a soul, a thinking, sentient being. Neither is he a bodiless being, and indeed he cannot be a being at all without a body. His body may change, as science declares it does gradually, hour by hour, until a complete change is effected in seven years.

Thus a man, a soul, a sentient being, may in a life of fifty years have sloughed off gradually sufficient matter to have composed seven bodies. But the moment the sloughing off of this dying matter and the substitution of living matter ceases, we have death; and as soon as the body dies the soul dies—that is, the intelligent being ceases. There can be no thinking without a brain, no breathing without lungs, no maintenance of life in any sense of the word without a body.

This would have been a total destruction of the soul had not God specially provided, as the Prophet declares, that he would redeem man's life from destruction, through the redemptive work accomplished by Jesus in giving his soul an offering for man's sin, and thus making possible man's resurrection from the dead.

It is in consequence of this divine provision through Christ for a resurrection of humanity that the Scriptures speak of death as merely a falling asleep for a time, to wait for the new body in the resurrection, rather than to speak of us as dying as the brute beasts. The word sleep implies that in the divine purpose a future life is intended, and will eventually be given.

"BUT NOW IS CHRIST RISEN"

St. Paul does not leave the matter of Christ's resurrection undecided. He positively affirms that, "Christ is risen from the dead," and that, thus risen, "he is the first-fruits of those that slept," which implies that when he was raised the others still slept. Jesus slept during a part of three days, from the time he died until the Father raised him from the dead, from hades, from sheol, from the tomb, on the third day. He, as the first-fruits of the sleeping ones, is an example and a guarantee of the fulfilment of the divine promise, that "there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and of the unjust."

It behooves us to take a decided stand, either with the Grecian philosophers and their theories, or with the Bible. The two are in conflict and whoever attempts to hold both is in confusion. If the dead are not dead, then no human being is dead. And if no one is dead, how could there be a resurrection of the dead?

The inconsistency of the theory held respecting the resurrection of the body has invited a very reasonable and just criticism. The skeptic asks, "How could the body be resurrected, after it has gone to dust and after the dust has been scattered to the four winds?" They tell us of a grave that was opened near an apple tree, and it was found that a root from the tree had entered the coffin and practically absorbed the corpse, from which it had produced thousands of apples, which in turn had been shipped to various parts of the world, some of the poorer grades being fed to hogs, whose hams were cured and sent abroad and thus passed into other human beings, to become parts of still other human bodies. The question is a proper one, but it is an unanswerable one from the standpoint of our former misbelief and our poor attempt to combine human philosophy and divine revelation.

But such a question brings no consternation to the Bible student who follows the Scriptures alone. The Scriptures never speak of the resurrection of our bodies. They do tell of the resurrection of the soul, and that in the resurrection God giveth it (the soul) a body as it pleaseth him.

How reasonable it will be for the world to be awakened in practically the condition in which they went down into death! And these will experience, if willing and obedient, a gradual resurrection or raising up to the image and likeness of Father Adam in his perfection. But some in the resurrection will receive spirit bodies like unto the angels, and some like unto the Body of Christ in his resurrection, which Saul of Tarsus beheld —"shining above the brightness of the sun at noonday."

The class that is promised a resurrection in spirit bodies is the church—the saintly few who walk in the footsteps of Jesus. The begetting of the holy Spirit which comes to these changes their nature from earthly to spiritual. If they are faithful to their covenant their resurrection will be to glory, honor and immortality, as explained by St. Paul in the context, saying, "It is sown in weakness, it is raised in power; it is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory; it is sown an animal body, it is raised a spirit body."

This is a description of the resurrection which God has promised to all the members of the body of Christ, which is the church. St. Paul declares that the members of this body fall asleep to awaken in the glorious morning of the new dispensation. But he adds, "We shall not all sleep"—some will be alive and remain till the second coming of Jesus. These, however, will not take precedence over the sleeping ones, for "The dead in Christ shall rise first; then we which are alive and remain" "shall be changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye," . . . because "flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God." As the death of Jesus was absolutely necessary as the atoning price for human sin, so the resurrection of Jesus was absolutely necessary, that he might not remain dead through all eternity, but be glorified, and in due time come again to effect the resurrection of his church and, subsequently, the awakening and uplifting of all the families of the earth.

Hearken to the special promise made to the church: "Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection; on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God, and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years." (Rev. 20:6) Also note the promise of the world's resurrection: "There shall be a resurrection, both of the just and the unjust." (Acts 24:15) Again, "They that have done evil" shall come forth, that they may enjoy a resurrection effected by "judgments," disciplines, chastisements, which will develop in them character; and the glory which will be attained will be perfection—a raising up to all at first possessed by Father Adam, lost through disobedience, and redeemed by the precious blood of Christ.—John 5:28, 29, R. V.

"A KIND OF FIRST-FRUITS"

Every Sunday is a memorial of the resurrection of our Lord from the dead, and if a proper conception of the Master's resurrection were kept in mind we would not think of quarreling with the expression "Easter Sunday." But alas, this name Easter is associated with heathen philosophies and idolatries, which did so much to make the Word of God of none effect; and the fact should be noted that it is the name of a Greek goddess. The compromising spirit induced some of the early church to admit the heathen philosophies and to commingle with these the inspired teachings of the Bible; but now there is the loud call to true Christians to rid themselves of science and philosophy "falsely so-called," and to return to the Biblical simplicity of the divine revelation.

Of this revelation alone St. Peter declares, "It is able to make you wise unto salvation," and to "give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified." And again, "The Word of God is sufficient, that the man of God may be thoroughly furnished unto every good work." Let us today, then, rejoice in him who died for our sins and who rose on the third day for our justification.

Let us rid our minds of the foolish thought that he did not really die, that he only seemed to die—that when the Roman soldiers crucified him, he simply got out of his body, laughed at them, and said, "I have not died at all; I could not die; you could not kill me." Let us remember rather the divine Word on the subject: "Christ died for our sins"; "He poured out his soul unto death"; "He made his soul an offering for sin." Let us remember the assurance of the Bible that eventually "he shall see the fruits of the travail of his soul and shall be satisfied." Let us rejoice also in the assurance of the Apostle that his soul was not left in hades, sheol, death, but that God raised him from the dead on the third day.

NOTE OF ADDITIONAL PROOF

If Christ did not die, then the death penalty upon Adam and his race has not been met. Those who claim that he did not die, that merely his body died, are illogical. They profess to believe that Jesus accomplished for us a redemptive work, that he died, "The just for the unjust." If Christ, the Redeemer, "poured out his soul unto death," and if his resurrection meant the recovery of his soul or being out of death, wherein is the logic in the declaration of some that it is not thus with the church nor with the world? If Jesus did not go to heaven when he died—if he went into hades, into the grave, into sheol, into death, who has the temerity to say that others go direct to heaven or hell or purgatory? Let us be consistent. The wages of sin is not purgatory, nor a hell of torture, in some far-off place. On the contrary, "The wages of sin is death." The Redeemer died and rose; and this is the assurance, that he who raised up Jesus from the dead will raise us up also, by Jesus, through his spirit and power; and not only so, but also the world of mankind, all who were involved in the death sentence upon the first man.

Therefore, the entire world is included in the death payment made by the Great Redeemer, that "As by man came death, by a man also shall come the resurrection of the dead; for as all in Adam die, even so all in Christ shall be made alive." But, says the Apostle, while every man who will come into Christ shall be made alive, each will come forth "in his own order." The Christ company shall come forth first—"the church of the firstborn, whose names are written in heaven." Afterwards will come those who will become his at, or during, his presence—during the thousand years of his kingdom glory. The opportunity of that thousand years will mean to every man the privilege of coming into fellowship with the Redeemer and King, Emmanuel. Whoever will accept the opportunity will receive the blessing of an admission to Messiah's family. As the Apostle says, they will become his. Under his heavenly guidance and blessing and regenerating influence, all such may attain again to a full image of God, lost in Eden, redeemed at Calvary.

"THE HARVEST IS THE END OF THE AGE"

"The harvest truly is plenteous, but the laborers are few; pray ye, therefore, the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth laborers into his harvest."—Matt. 9:37, 38.

For long years many of us thought of the Bible references to the harvest, our text included, as applicable to every time. We had not then learned that in order to be understood the Bible must be studied dispensationally. Now we perceive that the time of our Lord's first advent was the harvest of the Jewish age; and that as a harvest this text applied to that nation only. For more than sixteen hundred years the Law Covenant had been in operation between God and Israel. Under it they had been disciplined and schooled, instructed through the law and by the prophets.

Jesus came, not only to be the Redeemer of mankind in general, but also to offer himself as King to the Jews, and to make them his joint-heirs in his kingdom. Had there been a sufficient number of Jews in heart-readiness to receive the Gospel message, according to divine agreement, the entire bride class would have been elected, or chosen, from that one nation and not a Gentile would have been invited to participate in the honors of these spirit-begotten ones, called in the Scriptures, the spiritual "seed of Abraham." (Gal. 3:29) Nevertheless, the Lord knew that Israel would not be ready to receive him, and he provided for their rejection and the opening of the door to membership in the bride class to worthy Gentiles.

At the close of the Jewish age, at the time, therefore, that people should have and did have their greatest degree of ripeness and preparation, our Lord presented himself and began to do the reaping work. He sent forth his disciples as his representatives, two and two; and later, he sent "seventy also." When these returned, our Lord declared to them, "I sent you to reap that whereon ye bestowed no labor; other men labored, and ye are entered into their labors."—John 4:38.

The Great Teacher tells us distinctly that while his work was that of reaping, he blended with it a sowing. Seeing that the Jews were not ready for the kingdom, seeing that eighteen centuries would be required for the calling and developing of the saintly, spiritual ones, the Father started the work of seed-sowing for the new dispensation. Then, according to our Lord's parable, he left the work in the hands of his servants and went "into a far country"—even heaven itself. Since then he has been supervising his work and been represented through the faithful members of his church, his bride. He and the apostles sowed the "good seed" of the kingdom, meanwhile gathering the ripe wheat of the Jewish nation into the kingdom class, through the begetting of the holy Spirit. By and by the harvesting of the Jewish age ended completely, when all the wheat of the nation were gathered into the Gospel church of spirit-begotten ones, and then came the "burning of the chaff"—the great time of trouble with which the Jewish age ended, in A. D. 70.

Since then the work of seed-sowing, evangelism, etc., amongst the Gentiles has gone on, not without difficulty, however. As our Lord's parable shows, Satan, the adversary, came "while men slept"—in the night, the "dark ages"—and over-sowed the wheat field with tare seed. As a result, the field looked very prosperous, although, in reality, the "tares" had a choking and disastrous effect on the "wheat." Nevertheless, the Lord would not allow the separating of wheat from tares until the full end of the age, the harvest. The Bible intimates that the tares were so numerous and so intertwined with the wheat in their various interests that to have plucked them all up would have brought the disastrous "time of trouble" too soon. Hence, the decree that both should grow together until the harvest. "The harvest is the end of the age."—Matt. 13:39.

"THE RIGHTEOUS SHALL SHINE FORTH AS THE SUN"

Our studies together have led the majority of us to conclude that we are now living in the harvest time—in the end of this age. Oh, how glad we shall be if this is true! How glad we are to believe it true! And, we think, on good evidence. If it is true, as we believe, that the forty years "harvest" of this age began in 1874, the implication is that the trials of the church are nearly at an end; that the faithful will soon be gathered to the heavenly garner. By the glorious "change" he will cause them to "shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father," for the scattering of the world's dark night and the ushering in of the new day. Messiah's day is to bring glorious opportunities for earthly blessings to Israel, and to all the families of the earth through Israel. If our hopes be true, then they mean a blessing, not for the church alone, but for the entire groaning creation, which, if willing and obedient under Messiah's reign, will be released from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty appropriate to the children of God—Rom. 8:21.

As Bible students we have already seen that the Jewish nation as a people were prototypes of spiritual Israel in many particulars—that the period from the death of Jacob to the fall of Jerusalem, in A. D. 70, is the exact parallel to the period of the Gospel Church from the death of Jesus to 1915, A. D.

Surely it is not by accident that these two ages correspond, nor by accident that Israel as a people typified spiritual Israel! Neither will it be by accident if the events of 1915 correspond to the events of A. D. 70. In other words, as the harvest of the Jewish age ended with a time of trouble, so our Lord's words

assure us that this Gospel age and its harvest will end with "a time of trouble such as never was since there was a nation." (Dan. 12:1; Matt. 24:21) That a crisis is nearing everybody admits. That socialists and anarchists are threatening the very fabric of society, nobody will deny. The Bible alone explains the situation and shows us that the work of the present age is about completed; that the elect members of the bride of Christ have nearly all been found and made ready. The blessings for the world will be along material lines and will be ushered in by the "time of trouble," which will eventuate in anarchy, according to the Scriptures—a general leveling of the human family as the initial step of the reign of the glorious Messiah, whom men will shortly see and recognize with the eyes of their understanding.

LOYALTY TO GOD NECESSARY TO LIFE EVERLASTING

The first estate of the angels who fell was the angelic estate or condition. The design of the Creator was not that they should be men, but angels. Any power granted them for materializing would be for some proper work amongst men which would be facilitated by materialization. Therefore, they were privileged to appear as men and, having accomplished the purpose for which they materialized, to disappear. But these angels, becoming enamored of the conditions in the world at that time, preferred to live as men and not as angels. In this, however, they did not abrogate their powers as spirit beings, but maintained these; but materializing and living as men, they ignored their former condition. On account of thus violating their nature they were punished, and not on account of merely using the divinely granted power of materialization. They abused the power which it was proper enough for them to use.

We know that Satan's first misdemeanor was the deception of our first parents; but we do not know that he was the cause of the disobedience of the other angels. Probably he was; and, therefore, he was restrained in darkness. If it were not so, he might have been able to materialize all down through the six thousand years. Some people claim that they have seen materialized spirits. Martin Luther claimed that he had seen Satan. In the old Luther homestead they show visitors the mark of the ink on the door, where Luther threw the ink bottle at Satan's head. We do not know, however, whether there was a materialization, or whether Satan merely appeared to him as a man. And so, not being well informed on the subject, it is best not to take too positive a position, but simply to say that we do not know. The Scriptures state that these fallen angels were restrained in chains of darkness until the great day. This would seem to imply that Satan will have no part in the judgment of the great day, but would not, of necessity, prove it. Practically, we are left without any definite information.

When Satan beheld Adam and Eve placed under divine favor in the Garden of Eden, and saw that they were the parents of an unborn race, the temptation came to him that, if he could get them on his side, then he would become a mighty one, a ruler. Why did this temptation come to him? He knew well that the thought was disloyal to his Creator. Why did he entertain it? Did it come to his mind in so powerful a manner as to make it irresistible? No. The Scriptures tell us that all of God's work is perfect. He made both man and angels perfect. Satan's deflection was through his own mind. While he knew that the thoughts in which he was indulging were unjust and unrighteous, he probably did not intend to do evil. No one intends to do wrong, but merely to see how the thing will "work out." So Satan thought how possible it would be and how pleasurable. Thus he allowed his mind to run on. And the things that he did he would not have allowed himself to do at the beginning.

So far as we know, this is the process of every mind. The fact that sin develops does not prove that there was a germ of sin. But an active mind always plans. God's mind is perfect and active; and so are the minds of the angels. As new creatures it would be possible for us to cultivate or to allow to germinate in our minds certain thoughts, certain ambitions, certain imaginations, which would eventually lead us astray. It is the duty of every new creature to repudiate every thought that is disloyal to God or to his laws. The loyalty of the mind should be so great that anything contrary to God's will would be considered treason. This is the only safe position for the new creature. Everything known to be disloyal should be discountenanced, fought against. For, as surely as evil things come in, progress is made toward destruction of the loyalty of the mind.

We see an illustration of this principle in a very marked degree in Christian Science. Very few people would say that sickness is health and that black is white. When first being instructed, the patient thinks that it is funny to have some one tell him not to think that he is sick. At first this seems absurd; but when people have practiced this deception awhile, they become imbued with a kind of self-hypnotism. They seem to be carried away with that wrong process of reasoning. With Christian Science, nearly everything is unnoticed and unreasonable—everything except money and the good things of this life.

Some people are given to exaggeration; for instance, to say of sickness, "That is awful!" We should learn neither to appreciate things too highly nor to underestimate them. With a great many people nearly everything they say contains a great measure of exaggeration. This should not be the case with the church of Christ. They should by all means strive to speak the truth. "Let your yea be yea."

There is no means of knowing whether or not any of the angels who, before the flood, had indulged in sin ever repented and reformed, coming back to the Lord. It would be unwise therefore, to speculate. Even though God is plenteous in mercy, it seems to be a principle of his government that when anyone sins, justice will have some reckoning with the individual. This is not because of divine desire to see the creature suffer, but because this is a healthful principle for the divine government —that whosoever sins shall suffer. Even though the obliquity of the sin be forgiven, the sin must receive punishment. This principle, we think, holds with the angels. Even though they should be restored to divine favor, it would not be until there was some kind of correction to show that sin is wrong.

Neither are we informed as to whether or not any of these angels have repented since their sentence and delivery "into chains of darkness." But we should not be surprised if it were true that some of them have repented. Our thought is that this repentance would not change their sentence, but that they would remain in divine disfavor until their allotted period of punishment had ended; and then they would be tested and tried. Supposing this to be so, we think that none of these well-disposed angels would be inclined to violate the divine command on the subject of materialization. Our understanding is that there are some good angels and some evil angels; that any who would communicate with mankind are not good angels—that those who are in harmony with God would not allow themselves to communicate with mankind; and that during these thousands of years since their condemnation the fallen angels have divided into two classes, one being sympathetic with Satan, and the other having reformed; that probably the latter have suffered from the others; that they would have the opprobrium and opposition of the evil one; and that they would rather suffer for righteousness than indulge in retort and give evil for evil. From this standpoint we might suppose that they have been suffering all these thousands of years since they took their stand for the right. This, however, is merely speculation, and should not be held to dogmatically.

REPORT OF MEMORIAL CELEBRATIONS

The reports received show that the Memorial of the Redeemer's death on its anniversary, March 31, 1912, was very generally observed. We give the numbers of those who have reported participants above 50, up to the time of our going to press:—

Brooklyn, N. Y.	1,100	Minneapolis, Minn.	140	Bristol, England	85	Newark, N. J.	63
London, Tabernacle, Eng.	410	Toronto, Ont.	139	Lancaster, Pa.	84	Toledo, Ohio	60
" Forest Gate, "	252	Washington, D. C.	129	Columbus, Ohio	81	Milwaukee, Wis.	60
Chicago, Ill. (est.)	500	St. Louis, Mo.	128	Orebro, Sweden	81	Helsingfors, Finland	60
Pittsburgh, Pa.	375	Providence, R. I.	117	San Antonio, Texas	80	Grand Rapids, Mich.	59
Glasgow, Scot.	363	Kingston, Jamaica	114	Louisville, Ky.	79	Worcester, Mass.	58
Los Angeles, Cal.	270	Berlin, Germany	105	Stockholm, Sweden	77	Binghampton, N. Y.	55
Boston, Mass.	269	Vancouver, B. C.	96	Baltimore, Md.	76	St. Joseph, Mo.	54
Barmen, Germany	150	Detroit, Mich.	92	Cincinnati, Ohio	74	Tacoma, Wash.	54
Cleveland, Ohio	148	Kansas City, Mo.	88	Buffalo, N. Y.	73	Siegen, Germany	53
Seattle, Wash.	146	Copenhagen, Denmark	88	West Lynn, Mass.	69	Richmond, Va.	52
		Oakland, Cal.	85	Camberwell, Jamaica	65		

"VAIN REPETITION" IN PRAYER

Question—In Matt. 6:7, our Lord tells us, "When ye pray, use not vain repetitions, as the heathen do; for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking." The Apostle Paul, writing to the church (Col. 4:2), exhorts that they "continue in prayer"; again we read of the widow who was heard for her importunity. (Luke 18:2-5) Is this a suggestion that we should importune? How could we importune without repetition?

Answer.—We are to recognize a distinct difference between the "vain repetitions" of the heathen, which our Lord condemned, and the "continuing instant in prayer," "in everything giving thanks," in "praying and not fainting," acts which our Lord and the Apostles enjoined. (Rom. 12:12; Luke 18:1, etc.) This difference the Lord illustrated in the case of the woman who came to a judge repeatedly, asking that he avenge her of her enemy. Although the judge was not a man who would act justly, yet he did her justice on account of her persistence. In commenting upon her course, our Lord said that if an unjust judge be moved on account of importunity to do justice, how much more a just judge!

The thought illustrated in the parable is that of a person who cries to the Lord that injustice is being done—as with the church at the present time. We all realize that we are suffering injustice. We cry, "O Lord, deliver us! deliver us from the adversary!" Will God never deliver the church? For eighteen hundred years the church has been praying thus; and God has not answered this prayer. Will he never answer? Our Lord intimates that we should not lose faith. We are to have full confidence in his promises. Injustice will not forever obtain. The time will come, we are told, when Satan shall be bound and deceive the people no more.—Rev. 20:2, 3.

Therefore we do right to pray, "Thy kingdom come," week after week, year after year, century after century. To grow faint or grow weary in prayer would not be right. The proper course is to believe that God will fulfil what he has promised; and that all will come out in harmony with his will.

On another occasion our Lord gave a parable wherein one asked his neighbor for food and was refused. (Luke 11:5-8) He asked again. Finally the neighbor gave it to him on account of his importunity, on account of his patiently persisting. This parable, also, emphasizes the thought of importunate prayer. God has the blessing, and not only is able to give it, but has promised to do so. The delay in granting the request is because his due time has not come. Hence we are not to give nor to become weary, but to be constant in our prayers.

This is all very different, however, from the "vain repetitions" which our Lord condemned. But we do not think our Lord desires us to use repetition in our prayers. Some people use the words, "Our Father," or "Our God," or "Heavenly Father" more frequently than would seem to be good form—even using them in every fourth or fifth sentence. Their prayer would sound better on earth if they did not use these repetitions; though, no doubt, the repetitions would be understood in heaven; for these people seem to be as earnest as others.

Sometimes, after we have had morning worship and prayer, the one called upon to ask the blessing at table practically repeats the morning prayer. This course would imply that the person had forgotten that the general blessings had been asked in that prayer, and that he should be asking a blessing on the morning meal. To ask a blessing on the meal is not to pray in the ordinary sense of the word. Whoever "asks the blessing" should ask something in connection with the food and not attempt to pray for neighbors, relatives, etc.

But the repetitions which our Lord had in mind and which are specially reprehensible in the Lord's sight are formal prayers merely. To illustrate: the Chinese are said to have a praying wheel, which enables them to make many "vain repetitions" without the trouble of speaking a word.

It would seem that our Catholic friends also are given to a great deal of repetition in prayer. They repeat "Hail, Mary!" and believe that God will save them from suffering in purgatory for their repetitions. Some of the poor creatures say, "Hail, Mary!" as often and as fast as they can.

So with the Mohammedans. They say, "Great is Allah! Mohammed is his Prophet! Great is Allah! Mohammed is his Prophet!" again and again. We do not know what good they are doing, for they are merely wasting a great deal of valuable time to no purpose. We do not wish to make light of these people nor of their conduct. But we are bound to think that with those who are intelligent such prayers are only form. With those who are not intelligent it is different. We believe that they are sincere; and so our course is to think sympathetically of them, but not to do as they do, not to pray as they pray. Prayer in private, in our own room, may be as long as we please; but prayer in public should be short and to the point.

TRUTHFUL WORDS—POLITE SPEECH

MATT. 5:33-37; JAS. 3:1-12; 5:12.—MAY 26.

"Putting away falsehood, speak every man truth with his neighbor: for we are members one of another."—Eph. 4:25.

In our last study we contrasted the teachings of Jesus with those of the Pharisees respecting obligations to the law. Our decision was that "never man spake like this man." In today's study we note the contrast between his teachings and those of the religionists of his day. Others attempted to limit the habit of swearing, but the Great Teacher said, "Swear not at all." How foolish is swearing of every kind! We are not, of course, objecting to solemn affirmations or legal oaths as required by law.

Truly Saint Paul declares that those who receive the Spirit of the Lord possess the "spirit of a sound mind." They soon begin to realize the senselessness and vulgarity of swearing or of supposing it necessary to substantiate their words. Quite to the contrary, the fact that one boisterously swears that what he says is true implies that he does not expect his hearer to believe his simple word, and this in turn presupposes that his word ordinarily is not worthy of belief.

Note the injunction of the Master, "Let your speech be yea, yea, nay, nay"—anything further implies evil. The Master's meaning evidently is, When you say yes, let it be yes; when you say no, let it be no! Tell the truth! Your friends and neighbors by and by will learn how to value your speech. In other words, be so truthful in all that you say that it will be unnecessary to swear to its truthfulness, or to use any kind of specially forceful language to prove your sincerity—that you are neither overstating nor understating the truth.

MINISTERS SHOULD BE TRUTHFUL

In the second portion of our study St. James exhorts, "Be not many teachers, my brethren, knowing that we shall receive severer testing. For in many things we offend all. If any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect man, and able also to bridle the whole body." St. James seems to say that, while all Christians need to bridle their tongues, those in the more exalted positions are all the more liable to error in this respect. They have a special gift of speech and another special gift of opportunity to use this speech, and so, exerting a wide influence, their responsibility evidently is proportionate.

It is not for us to judge ministers or others; there is One that judgeth, the Lord. We greatly fear, however, that many ministers, as well as Christians in humbler stations, fail to fully appreciate their responsibilities for every word they utter or have the opportunity of uttering. Many tell us that for years they preached what they did not believe. How terrible! How stultifying to their manhood! How serious a reflection upon their brand of Christianity! However, we should rejoice that finally their consciences triumphed.

A LITTLE MATCH STARTS A BIG FIRE

St. James gives some forceful illustrations. Christians should put a bridle of restraint into their own mouths, even as they put bits into the mouths of their horses. They should have a rudder whereby to steer their own course in life, even as they put a rudder upon a ship. They should remember that the tongue, although one of the least members of the body, is the most influential of all. A blow struck by the fist might injure one person near enough, but a bitter word, like a poisoned arrow, may strike afar off; yea, like a shell from a great gun, it may explode and do much damage. Yea, more! Its influence may pass through telephones, telegraph wires, cables and wireless apparatus to every nook and corner of the earth, and be reproduced in newspapers all over the world. What a tremendous power! what a sacred trust! what a talent for use or misuse!

Not all of us have such wide opportunities for good or evil, but in our own homes, in our own offices, shops, markets, we may send forth either good or evil influences, far reaching for either happiness or misery, either upbuilding or down-tearing character, either of helpfulness or of discouragement. Surely no Christian could be indifferent to this his most powerful member. St. James suggests that as a match will kindle a great fire, so the tongue might start a great flame, a great commotion and do much injury. He suggests boasting as being one of the most dangerous uses of the tongue. Our experience corroborates this. Boasting often leads us into error and fastens us there because we are not humble enough to acknowledge the fault. It often leads into untruth from which we may have

difficulty in escaping. It is an evidence of pride, and therefore un-Christianlike, improper.

Angry words, bitter words, sarcastic words, taunting words, may set ablaze the course of a whole life and impel it with angry force toward the second death, Gehenna. Hence St. James suggests that such evil-breeding words are like sparks from Gehenna, tending toward destruction.

NO MAN CAN TAME IT

The Apostle reminds us that beasts and birds and fishes are all subject to a taming power under man's direction, but that no man can tame another man's tongue. Yea, is it not safe to say that no fallen man can tame his own togue? The only way by which to have our tongues brought into subjection to the divine will and made useful as servants of truth and righteousness and love is by having them converted. And since the tongue is but the agent speaking for the sentiments of the heart, it follows that it is the heart that needs to be converted. The power of true conversion, true transformation of character, so that "all things become new," is of God.

The child of God, begotten of the holy Spirit, has an assistance in the mastering and taming of his tongue that the unregenerate have not. How important then the message, "My son, give me thine heart"! Out of the heart are the issues of life. Out of the abundance of the heart, of the heart's meditations, the mouth speaketh.

St. James declares that the tongue of the natural man is full of deadly poison. His illustration seems to be that of a serpent. Alas, that in our fallen condition it should be so true that "the poison of asps is under their lips!" It is when we become new creatures, with a new motive power and incentive of love instead of selfishness, that the poison fangs are drawn. The new mind, the new creature, can then use the lips to show forth the praises of God and to bless his fellowmen.

PRAISING GOD—INJURING MEN

But note that the Apostle calls our attention to the fact that some who have become people of God, some who do him reverence, fail to take note of the fact that the same tongue with which they sing divine praises and tell divine mercy they use to backbite, slander, defame, crush, mortify, scathe, flay their fellowmen! Alas, we realize the truth of the charge! And to realize means to correct on the part of those who are seeking to do the divine will and to be true disciples of the Redeemer. A fountain cannot send forth at the same opening pure water and brackish. Hence we may know that if with our tongues we are doing injury to our fellowmen we are deceiving ourselves with respect to our real attitude toward God. We may know that God will reject the prayers and worship coming from a heart full of bitterness, anger, malice, hatred, envy, strife, and manifesting itself in acrimonious speech.

It was Carlyle who described sarcasm as being "the natural language of the devil." It was Faber who wrote, "No one was ever corrected by sarcasm; crushed, perhaps, if the sarcasm was clever enough, but drawn nearer to God, never." Robertson wrote, "Love is the remedy for slander." Surely the Golden Rule needs to be applied to our speech as well as to our actions. Truly Bishop Jackson wrote: "From being the messenger of peace and love, the tongue has become the fomenter of jealousy and ill-will, the lash of uncharitableness and the weapon of hatred."

PRAYER A GREAT PRIVILEGE

MATTHEW 6:1-18.—JUNE 2.

"Take heed that ye do not your righteousness before men to be seen of them; else ye have no reward with your Father which is in heaven."—Matt. 6:1. (R. V.)

The Master in today's lesson tells of proper and improper giving of charity. He extends the subject and explains proper and improper prayers and finally proper and improper fasting. In all these he denounces hypocrisy, theatrical display. His followers are to be actuated solely by a desire to please the heavenly Father and have his approval. There may be times and places where the giving of charity in the presence of others would be perfectly proper, or praying in the presence of others would be entirely right, and where fasting might come to the knowledge of others without reproach.

The point which the Great Teacher makes is the motive actuating us. If we are actuated by a selfish motive, if we are seeking show and applause or earthly gain, the procedure cannot bring divine approval or blessing—"Blessed are the pure in heart." We may be seen to do good or to pray or to fast, but we are not to do our charities, our praying and our fasting to be seen. Of such the Lord says, "They have received their reward"—nothing more is coming to them; they get the publicity sought.

THE PRIVILEGE OF PRAYER

Prayer is a privilege. Jesus did not command his disciples to pray, nor did he even give them a form of prayer until they requested it. "Prayer is the soul's sincere desire, uttered or unexpressed." The Lord's people must feel their need of divine grace and help in order to appreciate the privilege of approaching the throne of heavenly grace. The trials and difficulties, the sorrows and temptations of life frequently impel God's children to prayer. It marks a better, a higher Christian development when they love to come to the throne of grace, not only in their sorrows, but also in their joys, to give thanks, to praise, to worship, to adore.

It will be noticed that our Lord did not tell about how the world should pray, but merely taught his disciples: "when ye pray." As a matter of fact, the Gentiles, the world of mankind in general, have no access to the throne of grace. Only those in covenant relationship with God (Jews and Christians) ever had any divine assurance that their petitions would be accepted by him. This may cause surprise to some, so general is the custom of encouraging and exhorting everybody to pray. A brief glance at the situation, however, shows us the fixed principle underlying the matter. Let us note it. The world in general, the race of Adam, was alienated from God through wicked works. Adam was under a covenant with God by which he enjoyed the privileges of a son of God. This included fellowship, communion, prayer and divine supervision and care even to the extent of everlasting life. But Adam's disobedience broke that covenant, abolished that covenant-relationship and all its privileges. (Hos. 6:7, R. V.) The only ones who now enjoy the privilege of prayer are those who have been accepted of God back into covenant-relationship. The natural Israelite was so accepted under the Law Covenant; hence the Temple at Jerusalem was called the House of Prayer. It was specifically for the Jewish nation, but all nationalities had the privilege of becoming Jewish Proselytes and thus of being received into all the privileges of Jews, which included the privilege of prayer.

Our Lord, on the basis of his better sacrifice for sins, made holy and acceptable to still higher privileges of prayer such as became his disciples, his footstep followers. These, from Pentecost onward, were called sons of God and enjoyed the begetting of the holy Spirit. At first these were only Jewish believers, but in due time the middle wall of partition between Jews and Gentiles was broken down, and all Gentile believers, from the time of Cornelius onward, were accepted as spirit begotten sons and granted all the privileges of prayer.—Acts 10.

These Gentiles did not come into relationship with God through the Mosaic Law Covenant, but through the Covenant of sacrifice, under which they were called and accepted as joint-sacrificers with Christ: "Gather together my saints unto me, those who have made a covenant with me by sacrifice." (Psa. 50:5) Only such Gentiles as accept Christ and enter with him into this covenant of sacrifice can, during this age, become sons of God and enjoy the privileges of sonship, of which prayer is one. The habit of inviting people out of covenant-relationship with God to pray is both unscriptural and unreasonable. God heareth not sinners (John 9:31); those who come to Him thru Christ are acceptable only because Jesus is their Advocate. It is plain to be seen, then, that those who approach God in their own names—without having accepted the Advocate and his terms of discipleship—such can have no standing with the Father and their prayers are unacceptable.

Instead of exhorting our friends and neighbors to pray to God and to trust for the fulfilment of their prayers, we should give them the Scriptural counsel, to repent of sin and by faith to accept the forgiveness of their sins, according to the testimony of God's Word, by making a full consecration of themselves to be the footstep followers of Jesus. Then, as sons of God, they would have all the privileges of sonship in this present time as well as the glorious prospects hereafter.

VAIN REPETITIONS OF THE HEATHEN

All are heathens or Gentiles—all of the world who have not left the world and come into covenant-relationship with God through Christ. Such outsiders, not understanding the Only Way, the Only Door of God's favor, vainly suppose that they will be heard for their much speaking, and therefore repeat

their prayers. Some use praying wheels; others use beads; and still others repeat hundreds of times certain ejaculations.

None are heard except those of Jesus' followers, and Jesus counsels these not to think that the length of their prayers would make them acceptable with the Father. They have no need to offer long prayers, because, as Jesus said, "Your Father knoweth what things ye have need of before ye ask him." Why then should we ask at all? Because this is the divine arrangement, and evidently with the purpose of stimulating our faith and of giving us the greater and the more frequent blessings. God thus deals with us as with dear children whom he loves and whom he would educate into the practices of life most helpful to themselves. When Jesus had long prayers to offer they were never uttered in public; he went apart into the mountain. So with his followers; they are to go aside and have their communion with the Father chiefly in private, although fellowship in public prayer in gatherings of the Lord's people is distinctly approved.

A FORM OF SOUND WORDS

Responding to the request of his disciples Jesus gave a sample of a proper prayer. We note its brevity, its simplicity, its directness, its orderliness.

(1) It opens with an ascription of praise and a plea that we are coming as children to a father: "Our Father, which are in heaven, hallowed [adored, honored] be thy name." God's name represents his character, his kingdom, his personality. First of all, then, we ascribe honor, reverence, majesty, glory to our great Creator who through his appointed way we delight to call our Father in Heaven.

(2) Next in order we acknowledge the divine rule, authority. This means that our hearts are submissive to the will of God, for joy or sorrow, for pleasure or pain, for life or death, and we are continuing to express our confidence in the divine power and promise that ultimately the divine will shall be as fully and completely done in the earth as it is now done in heaven: "Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is done in heaven." In this we recognize the coming of Messiah's kingdom and indirectly our own hopes connected with that kingdom —that we, if faithful, shall be associated with the Lord in his glorious throne, in dispensing the blessings of divine power and mercy to mankind, so as to effect the regeneration of all the willing and obedient of mankind.

(3) Our daily needs, our daily bread, is next the subject of request: "Give us this day our daily bread." How simple! God has promised that our bread and our water shall be sure in the sense that he will not forget us and our needs. In our petitions we merely suggest that we are waiting confidently upon the Lord, nothing doubting his willingness and ability to perform his promises. He has not promised, nor are we to ask for an abundance, wealth, riches, nor are we to specify fine food or luxuries. The thought is, Father, grant us daily such provisions for life's necessities as seemeth to thee best for us. And should divine providence ever fail to make the provision, the believing soul is to recognize that it is neither from oversight nor from lack of power, but because divine wisdom sees best thus to deal with us.

(4) "Forgive us our debts as we have forgiven our debtors." Here is emphasized the Master's teaching that only the merciful shall obtain mercy, that only the forgiving shall be forgiven. This has no reference whatever to the forgiveness of their original sins—they are past and gone forever to those who remain under the blood; they were covered when we accepted Christ and entered into covenant-relationship with him. But we have daily shortcomings, weaknesses, imperfections, frailties, trespasses against the divine law. These we are to acknowledge, and divine arrangement has been made for their forgiveness in harmony with our prayers, with but the one proviso, viz., that we appreciate the matter so deeply that we ourselves are acting upon the same principle in our dealings with others.

(5) "Lead us not into temptation [to abandon us there]." We feel our own weakness, imperfection; hence, while knowing that we must be brought in divine providence into positions of trial and testing, we may well pray not to be abandoned there, not to be left to our own strength, but that in harmony with the Lord's agreement His grace may be sufficient for us.

(6) The Bible assures us that there is an evil one, and that he has great power and influence amongst men, that he is "the prince of the power of the air," and "the god of this age." How appropriate that we should request the Lord not to abandon us to the devil's wiles!

The words, "For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever, Amen," are not found in the oldest Greek manuscripts, and are therefore properly omitted in the Revised Version as being no part of the Scriptures. The kingdom or rule of the present time are not of God. His kingdom and power and glory are not in evidence. We await the establishment of Messiah's kingdom for the overthrow of Satan's empire, and the binding of the adversary for a thousand years, and the ushering in then of the divine kingdom and power and glory, forever.

SOME INTERESTING QUESTIONS

IT IS AN INDIVIDUAL MATTER

Question.—"If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature; old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." (2 Cor. 5:17) Are we to understand from this Scripture that The Christ, Head and body, is the new creature, or should we understand that this term, new creature, applies to the individual members of the church?

Answer.—Undoubtedly this is an individual matter. Individually we make consecration of our human nature in likeness to our Lord's consecration of his flesh. Individually we are begotten of the holy Spirit. Individually we are on trial for everlasting life or everlasting death. Individually we must make our calling and election sure, or fail. Individually we must be changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye. Individually, as we have borne the image of the earthly one, we shall bear the image of the heavenly.

Moreover, this new creation includes not only our Lord, its Head, and the church, his bride, but also the "great company," the virgin companions of the bride, equally spirit-begotten. They, too, will belong to this new creation because they will no longer be members of the human family. This new creation embraces all who belong to "the church of the first-borns, whose names are written in heaven." (Heb. 12:23) The chiefest in this glorious church will be the royal priesthood. The lesser brethren on the spirit plane will be the antitypical Levites, the great company class.

WE DIE BY LAYING DOWN OUR LIVES

Question.—What is the Apostle's thought in the statement, "So then death worketh in us, but life in you"?—2 Cor. 4:12.

Answer.—We understand St. Paul to refer to the tribulations which he and his companions were experiencing as they journeyed about in the interests of the truth. These persecutions, difficulties, trials by the way, were evidences that God was accepting their sacrifice. Thus their death was going on, as elsewhere he says, "We die daily." In this statement he expressed the object, or motive, that prompted him and his companions to act. What they did was done, not in a perfunctory manner, because they had a general mission, but from a heart motive and in harmony with the divine will, that they might bring spiritual blessings to the church.

The early church perceived that the apostles were very active in the service of the truth; and St. Paul explained that their motive was an unselfish one. He exhorted the church not to please themselves, but to lay down their lives for one another, as he and his companions were doing, as ensamples to the flock. All who are members of the royal priesthood are laying down their lives in the service. We are thus "building one another up in the most holy faith," until we are come to the New Jerusalem!—the glorious kingdom of the great Anointed One, the great Prophet, Priest and King, of whose profession Jesus is the great High Priest!

Our Lord declared, "I come to do thy will, O God"; "I delight to do thy will." (Heb. 10:9; Psa. 40:8) This was a part of the divine will, that he should lay down his life, finish his sacrifice, that he might ultimately give it on behalf of Adam and all of his race.

HE WILL HAVE COMPLETED HIS WORK

Question.—In 1 Cor. 15:28 we read that when Christ shall have accomplished the work appointed for him—the work of his Millennial kingdom and reign—and shall have put down all enemies (the last enemy to be destroyed being death), the Son also will be subject unto the Father, who put all things under him. In what sense will he be "subject" then more than during the Millennium?

Answer.—The special thought very evidently is that during Messiah's reign the Lord Jesus will be given full power and authority to control the world. That is the particular business appointed to him. You will remember that the Father, speaking of that time, says, "Ask of me, and I will give thee the heathen for thine inheritance"; and he declares that they shall be ruled with a rod of iron.—Psa. 2:8, 9.

This thousand-year period, known as the Millennium is set apart for this work. Suppose that you were given a position by the Government, or the State, with commission to do a cer-

tain thing for a certain period of time, with the understanding that when it is accomplished you will be given a reward for doing it. You are instructed: "Everything is in your hands. Do the work, and you may have all of 1912 in which to do it. Attend to the matter." Then what? After having completed the work, you resign this special commission, this special office conferred upon you for the year. You will no longer hold it.

So at the end of the Millennium our Lord Jesus will no longer hold office as Mediator between God and men, as he will have done for the one thousand years. Why not? There will be nothing more to be accomplished. During the thousand years he will have done his work as Mediator so thoroughly that there will be nothing more to do. That special work will have been fully accomplished.

THEIRS WILL BE A HEAVENLY INHERITANCE

Question.—If the antitypical Levites have no inheritance in the land, as shown in the type, what will be their reward?

Answer.—The typical Levites were the whole tribe of Levi, a part of which was selected for a little company of priests. In the wilderness of Sinai, the Lord set the Levites apart for his service. (Num. 3:11-16) Thenceforth, that one tribe represented the first-borns of Israel, who, the Apostle says, were typical of the church of the first-born (Heb. 12:23)—typical of the spiritual class.

In the type, the entire tribe of Levi was cut off from having any possession in the land. No title to land was given them; no field was given them. The land was divided amongst the other tribes, but not amongst the Levites. God thus typified the fact that the antitypical Levites would not have an earthly inheritance, but rather the spiritual or heavenly inheritance. All the Gospel church are called to heavenly conditions; and therefore they are cut off from their earthly rights as men, that they may have the heavenly rights as new creatures. The Apostle says God has "called us with a holy calling," a "heavenly calling," a "high calling."—2 Tim 1:9; Heb. 3:1; Phil. 3:14.

The tribe of Levi was divided into two classes, a priestly class and a Levitical or servant class. In the antitypical are two classes on the spirit plane—the royal priesthood, composed of Christ and the church, his bride; and also the servant class, "the virgins, her companions, who follow her," and who are to enter into the King's palace with rejoicing. As these do not come up to the high standard required for admission into the bride class, they are not counted worthy of being in this class who are presented unto the King "in raiment of needlework." Nevertheless, they must all be grand characters, worthy to receive palm branches, indicating their victory over sin and all evil.—Psa. 45:13-15; Rev. 7:9-17.

JUSTIFICATION COMPLETED AT CONSECRATION

Question.—Are we grafted into the olive tree when justified or when consecrated?

Answer.—Both. That is to say, the completion of justification is at consecration. No one has his justification complete, or full, unless he has consecrated himself. Our justification begins when we turn toward that which is just or right, and away from that which is unjust; and we get more justification, more nearly right (for justification means being right), as we proceed toward consecration. When our justification has progressed to the point of full consecration, only then are we recognized as begotten of the Spirit, and as branches in the Vine, pictured by the Lord in the 15th chapter of John. In the picture of the olive tree the same is true. Only spiritual branches are grafted into this "olive tree."

The question is doubtless based upon Romans 11:17, where the Apostle tells us that the Jewish nation represented the olive tree which had the good root. The root of the olive tree was the definite promise made to Abraham—"In thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed." (Gen. 12:3) The promise then began to produce branches. Every individual Jew claimed to be connected with this Abrahamic Covenant. The Apostle tells us that because of unfaithfulness many of these branches were broken off. The time that they were broken off was during that forty-year period which began with our Lord's ministry and ended with the destruction of Jerusalem.

During that time all the branches that were not fit to be kept in were broken off, and those that were fit to stay in were "cleansed by the washing of water through the Word," and transferred from Moses into Christ, and begotten of the holy Spirit. The Apostle proceeds to say that ever since the Jewish branches were broken off God has been gathering branches out of the Gentiles, and that we are being grafted in instead of those broken off branches. Thus you and I may get into the olive tree. We who were by nature children of wrath, aliens, are now grafted into the real tree through which the blessing is to come.

If we can get into that olive tree, into that Vine, into Christ, the next thing to do is to abide in him. There are certain tests applied; and those who do not conform to these tests will not be permitted to abide, but will be cut off. Respecting the Vine the Great Teacher said, "Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he [the Father] taketh away; and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit." (John 15:2) So, if we have the trimmings and prunings that he gives to the fruit-bearing branches, let us rejoice that we are in the good Husbandman's care and are in good condition. If we abide in the true Vine the time is not very far distant when we, with the remainder of the church, will be glorified and constitute the kingdom of Messiah, which in turn shall bless natural Israel and, through natural Israel, all mankind.

IT IS NOT SCRIPTURAL

Question.—Is it scriptural to say that the glorified members of the church have reigned at any time up to the present?

Answer.—No! They have not reigned at any time. At least, if they have reigned, we have not found it out, and they have made a poor reign of it so far. All the reigning we have seen in the world thus far has been a rather poor kind. We would say, however, that the kings of the earth are doing the best they can do; they are doing just as wisely as they know how to do under the circumstances and conditions. We are not specially faulting them.

Take the Czar of Russia, for instance: the poor man does not know how to do better than he is doing. Probably the same is true of the Emperor of Austria, the President of France, King George of Great Britain, Emperor William of Germany, etc. These would all rather see their people happy; but they are imperfect men with imperfect subjects and are surrounded by such conditions as are almost impossible to overcome. Therefore we are not to fault them that their reign is not perfect. If they had perfect subjects, doubtless the world's condition would be very much better.

The reign of Christ did not in any sense begin in the past. Our Catholic friends claim that Christ began his reign some time ago; and that for over a thousand years the Pope has been the representative of Christ as king of earth; that it is not Christ himself who is to reign, but his vicegerent, a title which they give to the Pope, meaning the one who rules instead of Christ.

We think that our Catholic friends are laboring under a misapprehension. They do not get the proper thought. You remember the Apostle says of some, Ye have reigned as kings in the earth; you are getting along very prosperously; you have had no trouble or persecution at all. Then, after making fun of them a little, he says, I would to God that ye did reign; for if you did, we would reign with you.—1 Cor. 4:8.

We hold that this is still true. When the reign of Christ begins, you will find it such a thorough reign that all the members of his body will have some part in it. So we assume that when our Lord's kingdom shall begin its reign conditions for the whole world will be very much changed. If the reign of Christ should begin today, the saints would be with him; for he is to be the great Judge, the saints the under-judges; he is to be the great King, the saints the under-kings; he is to be the great Priest, the saints the under-priests—"A royal priesthood," "kings and priests unto God," who "shall reign with Christ a thousand years."

With his reign will begin the reign of righteousness, for the Scriptures intimate that sin will be suppressed promptly. Nothing shall hurt, or offend, or destroy, in all God's holy kingdom. (Isa. 11:9) Nothing will be allowed to do so. The Great Judge will know how to inflict such punishments and so promptly as to prevent the reign of evil; and then the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness; for instance, if some one wished to speak evil of his neighbor and a punishment, such as paralysis of the tongue, should come upon him merely for the intention, before he spoke the evil, do you not suppose that he would learn the lesson that he must not think evil? He would not speak the evil, for his tongue would be paralyzed before he even spoke the word. The Bible says that he will learn the lesson. "When the judgments of the Lord are in the earth the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness."—Isa. 26:9.

This will not, of course, affect the heart; but it will enable them to learn to do right, to see the effect of righteousness in the world. Thus they will have the opportunity of either loving or hating that condition. If they learn to love that condition they will get into the right attitude of heart, pleasing and acceptable to God; and so at the end of Christ's Millennial reign they will be ready to have the full blessing of eternal life; but, even though not permitted to do the wrong thing, if at heart they still love iniquity, with all the knowledge before them and experience behind them, if they will not learn to love righteousness and hate iniquity, they will be of those worthy of cutting off in the second death, from which there will be no recovery.

WE ALL NEED "POEMS OF DAWN"

This book of 286 pages contains nearly three hundred beautiful poems of consecration and encouragement for Christians. It is now in stock, and all orders have been filled to date. Cloth edition, corresponding in style to the new edition of STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES, will be supplied at 25c. each, postpaid; leatherette, red burnished edges, same size as Keratol STUDIES, 25c. postpaid; leatherette, gold edges, 35c. postpaid; full sealgrained leather, gold edges, corresponding in size and style with the India edition of SCRIPTURE STUDIES, 50 cents each postpaid. "Poems of Dawn" would make an excellent gift for any friend or relative not in the Truth, although most fully appreciated by the saintly. It is topically arranged, but you cannot open at random and read without being refreshed, comforted, drawn nearer to God.

INTERESTING LETTERS

TRAVELING NOW IN THE MORE EXCELLENT WAY

TO THE WATCH TOWER SOCIETY:—

DEAR BRETHREN—Tardy though it may be, it is nevertheless with the greatest pleasure that I am writing you an expression of my appreciation of your thoughtful courtesy to me during my visit to New York City early in 1910.

I was a stranger and you took me in, and to your kindness to me (not only then a stranger, but a skeptic as regards present truth) is, under God and his grace to me, due the glorious fact that I am now in the truth.

Last January, while prospecting in the Yukon delta country, I made my consecration, and while in Nome this summer I received from Brother Bayne a copy of the vow, and after consecration and prayer I made "My Vow to the Lord."

And, bless his name, he has been very gracious to me, as I have stumbled dreadfully time and again; but still he gives me assurance that I may yet be worthy to serve him in some humble way. And I earnestly pray daily that I may have the strength and the grace to renewedly endeavor to keep my vow to the letter, to the end that "his rule may come into my heart more and more" until the glorious day when I can keep the old man under all the time and do God's will and his alone.

From Brother Bayne I also received a few copies of "STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES" and other of our literature. I believe it has pleased God to give me opportunities to place some of these in the hands of those who "hunger and thirst after righteousness."

Many times it has been a source of much pleasure to me to tell my friends and acquaintances of my visit to the Tabernacle and Bethel and what "manner of men" you all are. You may have forgotten that your kindness to me included the privilege of having tea with the brothers and sisters, with our dearly beloved Pastor Russell at the head of the table. The atmosphere there—of clean simplicity, earnest humility, old-fashioned virtue, quiet strength, brotherly love and true reverence—is one of my most fragrant memories.

And I want you to know, too, that each ray brings home to me more and more what a special privilege it was, after tea, to meet Pastor Russell personally, and feel the magnetism and lovableness, and (though then not in the truth) to sense the Spirit of God in this man who has labored so long and steadfastly and to such wonderful purpose in the vineyard.

No one who has read of the man Christ Jesus, and his marvelous life, could, I believe, meet or hear Brother Russell speak without feeling that in him, at least, the world has one man of God, who like the Savior, is "touched with a feeling of our infirmities."

I remember one dear Brother there telling me (in answer to a remark of mine that the sacrifice of himself and family of the good things of this world to be co-laborers at the Brooklyn Bethel was at least worthy of surprise and perhaps commendation) that he had gained joys and pleasures of life far beyond what he had experienced in work-a-day business and conventional home.

I could not see it then, but now I know it. Just to serve him is life itself. What joy it must be to feel and to know that "They that be 'teachers' (margin) shall shine as the brightness of the firmament, and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars forever and ever."

Dear Brethren, it would please me very much if at some suitable time you would recall to Pastor Russell the fact of our having met, and tell him that I am now striving to travel in the "more excellent way."

God's blessing on our dear Pastor and on all the dear colaborers at Brooklyn Bethel and in the harvest work everywhere, is the earnest, daily prayer of,

Yours in His service,

FRANK H. WASKEY.—Alaska.

ALMOST LED ASTRAY BY SATAN'S DEVICES

MY BELOVED BRETHREN IN THE ANOINTED:—

I wish to thank you for sending me THE TOWER. A year ago I requested that you send it on credit, promising to pay for same later. I found it impossible to fulfil my promise, but will again promise to meet my obligations as soon as I secure a position. I am at present unemployed. Please continue sending THE TOWER, for it is worth its weight in gold.

I could not have said this awhile ago. I must confess that during the past couple of years I have been very unfaithful. I was anything but a humble, faithful follower of the dear Lord. I was serving sin and self. I had no desire for "present truth," still I had enough respect for it to not combat it. I did not meet with the dear brethren. In short, I was very nearly trapped beyond hope of regaining freedom, in one of Satan's most successful devices, viz., Spiritism. I was induced to purchase a "ouija" board, "just for amusement"; but I dare say that that "amusement" almost cost me my "crown."

I spent all my spare time in operating the "board," and became so skilled in its manipulation that it would perform rather difficult feats with the least solicitation. A neighbor, having become fascinated upon seeing what the "little thing would do and say," purchased one for his own use. After trying to operate it (without success, however), he came to me, requesting that I "try my hand." Strange as it may appear, it did all I asked of it, and told me that it was a cousin to my board, and would "do anything" for me.

I can easily see that Satan, the chief operator of all "ouija" and planchette boards, was only trying with all his might to get me more firmly into his clutches. My good morals were not entirely destroyed, however, and the adversary, knowing this, advised me not to neglect my brethren or my Bible. I then asked whether the DAWNS are a correct interpretation of God's Word. To this the reply came, "Yes; the DAWNS are correct, not only in doctrine, but in chronology as well." I then asked by what power the board was operated. It answered, "By evil, spirit power." It further confessed to me that the spirits who operate the board have no other mission than to hinder all of the Lord's people. It further stated that they took "special delight in buffeting, hindering and endeavoring to ensnare Brother Russell and his co-laborers at the Bethel Home."

After thus confessing, I concluded to destroy the board, which I finally did. Before the destruction it pleaded for mercy and tried every way to work on my sympathy. It told me that it would much rather be given away or sold.

Before closing, I wish to add that, shortly after I bought the "ouija," I asked it if there was any possibility of my ever becoming as accomplished as "Hermann the Great." The answer came, "No." This answer rather surprised me, and I wanted to know why it answered me thus. I used untold persuasion before I received the reason for the "No." And when I did get the answer, I got it a word at a time. The answer in substance follows: "Because God will not permit it." In order that I might not be mistaken I inquired as to what "God" was meant. I was informed that it meant "the Almighty."

I need not explain that such a reply shocked me. It bewildered me to think that Satan had to confess thus. If Satan, or any of his force, ever told the truth it was then. Yes, dear, beloved brethren, I am a miracle of the dear Father's grace, through the wonderful merit of our blessed Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Oh, how my yearning heart goes out to him for his love to me!—I, the least of the least!

Dear ones, pray for me that I may stand all the tests that will come upon me to try me from now on. And if this letter should reach the remainder of the Lord's fold, I solicit all their prayers. I feel I need them. I feel my nothingness. I feel my need of a Savior now more than ever. And while I begrudge all the time I wasted in foolishness, I thank the dear Father for the lessons learned. I tried to write you several times during the past wasted years, but it seems as though it was not the proper time to do so. The battle was not yet completed. I feel that I have at last broken away from the adversary, and, trusting to God's grace, I expect it to be final. I am sorry I consumed so much of your needed time by writing so lengthy a letter, but I could not keep quiet any longer.

In closing, I will request that you continue THE TOWER, for I need it, I want it, and I will pay both years' subscription as soon as possible. Thanking you for all past favors, and always making mention of you all in prayer since I have taken the blessed "Vow," I remain,

Yours in the only Hope,

HARRY W. DAVIDGE.—N. J.

JESUS NO LONGER FLESH—NOW "THAT SPIRIT"

"With what body do they come?"—1 Cor. 15:35.

In the May 1 issue of THE WATCH TOWER we discussed the fact of the resurrection and showed from St. Paul's words that without God's purpose of a resurrection those who have fallen asleep in death would have perished as brutes. We followed with the Apostle the assurances that Christ did rise from the dead and did become the First-fruits of all those who have gone into the sleep of death. Others, indeed, were awakened temporarily—as, for instance, Jairus' daughter, Lazarus the friend of Jesus, and the son of the widow of Nain.

Yet none of those instances is counted as a resurrection, for it is said that Christ is the first-fruits of those who slept. Their awakening was merely of a temporary nature, and they soon relapsed into the sleep of death. They did not have a full resurrection—*anastasis*—a raising up to perfection of life, such as the redemptive work of Jesus guarantees to Adam and to all his race willing to accept the same under the terms of the New Covenant.

You will recall that in our last issue we demonstrated from the Scriptures that it is not the the body, but the soul, that is promised a resurrection—that it was our Lord's soul that went to sheol, hades, to the death state, and that God raised him up from death on the third day. We noted a difficulty into which all Christendom was plunged by the unscriptural theory that it is the body that is to be resurrected. We now continue to search and note well further difficulties into which this error plunged us as believers in the words of Christ, particularly in connection with our Redeemer's resurrection.

The ordinary thought in Christian minds in respect to Jesus' death and resurrection is that when he seemed to die he did not die; that he, the being, the soul, could not die; that, instead, he went to heaven, and then, on the third day, came back to get the body which had been crucified; and that he took it to heaven forty days later; that he has had that body ever since; and that he will have it to all eternity, marred with the print of the nails in his hands and feet, the thorns upon his brow, and the spear mark in his side. What a ghastly thought! How strange that we should ever have been misled into so unscriptural and unreasonable a theory! Some endeavor to gloss the matter by suggesting that our Lord's flesh is glorified—that it shines—the shining presumably making the wounds all the more conspicuous.

ABSURDITY OF THEORIES RECEIVED FROM DARK AGES

Our Methodist friends have not yet changed their statement of the matter, namely, "He ascended up on high, taking his fleshly body with him, and all that appertained thereto, and sat down on the right hand of God." This medieval statement correctly admits that the fleshly body was not the Lord's, but that he, the soul, took it with him as luggage. The statement, "and all that appertained thereto," presumably would refer to our Lord's sandals, walking stick and such clothing as the soldiers did not divide amongst them at the time of his crucifixion—if indeed he had any others! But our dear Methodist friends want to be sure that nothing was left behind.

All this is of a piece with the theory that the saints when they die go to heaven, and then, later, come back and get their bodies, "and all things appertaining thereto"—the inconveniences that they have been rid of for centuries! How many trunkloads of "things appertaining thereto" may be taken by some, and how mixed an assortment by others is not stated. Neither are particulars given respecting those whose clothing, etc., have meantime worn out. But we have had enough of this, if it has helped us to see the absurdity of our theories received from the "dark ages"—if it has awakened us to thought and to Bible investigation on this important and interesting subject.

WHAT SAY THE SCRIPTURES?

The Bible presentation of this subject is every way reasonable, consistent and harmonious. St. Paul points out that "there is a natural body and there is a spirit body." He does not mean and he does not say that the spirit body is a human body glorified. Quite to the contrary. He declares that "flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God"—no matter how glorified it might be. A human being is so totally different from a spirit being that, as St. Paul says, "It doth not yet appear what we shall be," in our resurrection change; and the Scriptures do not even attempt to give us an explanation.

The Bible merely declares that as we now bear the image of the earthy, Adam, we shall, by the glorious resurrection change, be given a share in the nature and likeness of the second Adam, our glorious Lord. We shall be like him and see him as he is; and, be it noted, we must change from flesh and blood conditions to spirit conditions by resurrection power, in order that we may see him as he is. Surely this proves that our Lord Jesus is no longer flesh, as he once was—"in the days of his flesh."—Hebrews 5:7.

DIFFERENCE BETWEEN HEAVENLY AND EARTHLY BODIES

Our text calls attention to the difference between celestial bodies and terrestrial, or earthly bodies, and declares that they have different glories. It tells us that the first Adam was made a living soul, a human being, but that our Redeemer, who humbled himself and took the earthly nature, "for the suffering of death," thereby became the second Adam—the Heavenly Lord. The wide distinction between the second Adam and the first Adam is clearly set forth. One was earthy and the other heavenly. As we now bear the image of the earthy, we shall, if faithful, bear the heavenly image of our Lord, the second Adam, after our resurrection change.

St. Paul illustrates by saying that we know by many kinds of organisms on the earthy or fleshly plane—one flesh of man, another of beasts, another of birds and another of fish. But however different the organisms they are all earthy. So, on the heavenly plane, the spirit plane, there are varieties of organisms, but all are spirit.

Our heavenly Father is the Head or Chief—"God is a Spirit." Cherubim, seraphim, and the still lower order of angels are all spirit beings; and Christ Jesus, our Redeemer, after finishing the work of sacrificing appointed to him, was resurrected to the spirit plane—far above angels, principalities and powers—next to the Father; and thus we read, "Now the Lord is that Spirit." And again that "He was put to death in the flesh, but quickened (or made alive) in the spirit."—1 Pet. 3:18.

The more we examine the subject the more foolish and unscriptural the views handed to us from the dark ages appear. For instance, the Scriptures clearly set forth that our Redeemer, prior to becoming a man, was a spirit being—"the Only Begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth." His leaving the spirit plane to become a man is Scripturally described as a great stoop or humiliation. Is it reasonable to suppose that the heavenly Father would perpetuate to all eternity that humiliation, after it had served its intended purpose? Surely he would do nothing of the kind!

The Bible tells us why Jesus humbled himself to the human nature—"a little lower than the angels." It was because a man had sinned, and the Redeemer must, under the law, be on the same plane of being as the one whom he would redeem. Thus Jehovah particularly specified, "An eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth, a life for a life." Hence the death of an angel, or of our Lord in his pre-human condition, could not have effected the payment of man's penalty and the consequent release of the condemned race. Thus again we read, "A body hast thou prepared me," "for the suffering of death."

GOD HIGHLY EXALTED HIM

No one questions that this applies exclusively to our Lord's experiences during the years in which "He who was rich for our sakes became poor, that we through his poverty might be made rich." Surely it is unsupposable that the Father would arrange a plan by which our Redeemer's faithfulness in accomplishing man's redemption would cost him an eternity of poverty, humiliation, degradation to a plane "a little lower than the angels," while the church would be made rich, and would attain a spirit state "far above angels"—be made "partakers of the divine nature."—2 Peter 1:4.

On the contrary, the very same Apostle who tells us of our Lord's humiliation carries the matter to the climax, telling us of his faithfulness, as the Man Christ Jesus, unto death, even the death of the cross; and then he adds an assurance of the heavenly Father's faithfulness in not leaving his Son on a lower plane: "Wherefore," says the Apostle, "God also highly exalted him, and hath given him a name above every name." This, too, is in harmony with our Lord's words in his prayer to the Father. A joy had been set before him by the Father—a joy of pleasing the Father, of bringing a blessing to mankind, and the joy also of exaltation, as a special reward for obedience.

But the Redeemer, ignoring all the promises of a higher glory as a reward for his faithfulness, merely prayed to the Father in these words, "Father, glorify thou me with the glory which I had with thee before the world was." In humility he asked no reward. He did not pray, Remember that you

promised a still greater exaltation in glory! No, he would be quite content to have served the Father's purpose and plans and then to return to the glorious state in which he was before he left the glory, and for our sakes became poor and took upon himself the human nature. And what said the heavenly Father in response to that prayer? Oh, we remember the words of Jehovah were, "I have glorified thee, and I will glorify thee again," or further—the implication is that of a still higher glory than the one which he enjoyed before he was made flesh.

HE APPEARED AND DISAPPEARED

Two lines of difficulties present themselves, one of which can be answered and the other cannot. The unanswerable difficulty is where a natural-minded man undertakes to reason the subject out. He finds it impossible of comprehension as he finds other items of divine revelation. St. Paul explains this, saying, "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." The Apostle proceeds to tell us that all men are natural men, except such as have been begotten by the holy Spirit. All natural men will, in their resurrection, receive earthly, or human bodies, while all spiritual ones, new creatures in Christ, will receive spirit bodies, as St. Paul explains in our context, verses 36-50.

Those of our readers, therefore, who have never accepted Christ, and made a full consecration of their all to be his disciples, following in his footsteps, may know that they have not been begotten of the holy Spirit (because only upon these terms are any begotten of the spirit). These, therefore, we will ask to consider what we say, and hold it, if they please, tentatively, until such time as, in God's providence, they may be begotten of the holy Spirit, and thus be enabled to understand spiritual matters such as this.

Another class who have difficulty on this subject are the spirit-begotten ones who have been entangled in their reasoning by the declaration of the creeds respecting the resurrection of the body. It is difficult to unlearn error. When visiting various lands and learning of the hold of superstition upon the heathens, we said to ourselves, We believe that we Christians experience just as much difficulty in unlearning our errors as these heathens do in getting free from theirs.

THE UNCONSECRATED CANNOT UNDERSTAND SPIRITUAL PROBLEMS

Coming to the point of what is to be resurrected, we note the fact that our Lord appeared in a body of flesh, and showed the disciples the print of the nails and the hole made by the spear. But we, perhaps, failed to note that only twice did he thus appear, and but for a few moments each time. His other six or seven appearances during those forty days were also very brief, and in various bodies—once as a gardener, another time as a traveler—his third time as a stranger on the shore, and to Saul of Tarsus, as a spirit being of more than angelic brightness, "shining above the brightness of the sun at noonday." We overlooked the fact that these appearances, if all put together, would probably not have exceeded four hours out of the entire forty days in which our Lord tarried with his disciples after his resurrection and before his ascension. We were not critical students when we overlooked these things, and forgot to ask ourselves why these things were so.

Now we see more distinctly why our Lord did as he did. His disciples were natural men and therefore could not appreciate spiritual things. Furthermore, they could not receive the guiding of the holy Spirit until the Lord's ascension and appearance in the presence of the Father on behalf of his church, to make satisfaction for their sins, and to make them acceptable joint-sacrificers with him. Meantime, had Jesus not tarried those forty days—had he ascended immediately after his resurrection—the disciples, stunned and bewildered, would have had no assurance of his resurrection. They would have found it impossible to go out and tell the people that he had risen from the dead when they had no proof to this effect.

And even if Jesus had appeared to them as he did to Saul of Tarsus, above the bright shining of the sun, this would not have been convincing and satisfactory. They might have said, Here is a phenomenon, but how can we positively associate it with the life and death of Jesus? Matters were different with Saul of Tarsus. He needed something to thoroughly arouse him and to teach him for all time, and others through him, that the Lord is not a man, but "that Spirit." Besides, some of the disciples who already believed were able to give Saul of Tarsus assurances of what they knew respecting the resurrection of Jesus and his ascension.

NO FOOLISH SUGGESTIONS IN BIBLE ABOUT THE RESURRECTION

The Lord adopted the only reasonable way of helping his disciples to understand that he was no longer dead—that he had risen from the dead—and that he was no longer human, but had been glorified, and had become a spirit being. The two things were necessary and they were done at the same time.

Even on the occasion when our Lord appeared in a body like to the one crucified, he took care that the manifestation should be under such conditions as would positively prove that he had become a spirit being. He came into the room where they were while the door was shut, and after a few words with them he vanished from their sight, as no human being could have done and as he never did during his earthly career. That the Apostles caught the thought is well evidenced by St. Paul's argument on the subject in the context. There is no foolish suggestion in the Bible about Jesus having a fleshly body in heaven—that is all in our creeds and hymn books, prepared for us by our well-meaning but mistaken forefathers, who used to burn one another at the stake if they failed to promptly agree together on such propositions.

We mourn the dead, but they shall wake;
The lost, but they shall be restored!
Oh, well our human hearts might break
Without that sacred word!
Dim eyes, look up! sad hearts, rejoice!
Seeing God's bow of promise through,
At sound of that prophetic voice:
"I will make all things new."

THE SABBATH DAY

Seven is a very prominent number in the Bible—in everything relating to the divine program. In the first chapter of Genesis the Sabbath day is referred to in a figurative way in speaking of the seventh epoch of God's creations on our earth—bringing order out of chaos. Not until Mt. Sinai, however, when the law was given to Israel on two tables of stone, was the day Sabbath made obligatory on anybody. And since that Law Covenant was made with the one nation (Israel) and none other, the Sabbath requirements of that law apply to that nation only. This does not signify that the setting apart of a certain time for rest would be of advantage only to the Jew, nor that a special seventh day devoted to God would be disadvantageous to all people. It merely means that God entered into covenant relationship with the one nation only, and hence to them only he told his will, his law—obedience to which he made the foundation of the blessing he promised to that people. There is no room to question the import of the Fourth Commandment of the Jewish law. It distinctly commanded that the seventh day of the week should be to the Jews a rest day, in which no work of any kind should be done, either by parent or child, employer and servant, male or female, ox or ass or any creature owned by a Jew. It was a rest day pure and simple. Divine worship was not commanded to be done on that day—not because God would be displeased to have divine worship upon that day or upon any day, but because there is a reason connected with the matter which related, not to worship, but to rest, as we shall see. The strictness of this law upon the Jews is fully attested by the fact that upon one occasion, by divine command, a man was stoned to death for merely picking up sticks on the Sabbath day. It is plain, therefore, to be seen that the law given to Israel on this subject meant what it said to the very letter.

In the New Testament Jesus is supposed by some to have taught a laxity in the matter of Sabbath observance, but this is quite a misunderstanding. Jesus, born a Jew, "born under the law," was as much obligated to keep that Law in its very letter as was any other Jew. And he did not, of course, violate the obligation in the slightest degree. The Scribes and Pharisees had strayed away from the real spirit of the Law in many particulars. Their tradition, represented at the present time by their Talmud, attempted to explain the law, but really, as Jesus said frequently, made it void, meaningless, absurd. For instance, according to the traditions of their elders, it was breaking the Sabbath, if one were hungry, to rub the kernels of wheat in their hands and blow away the chaff and eat the grain, as the disciples did one Sabbath day in passing through the wheat field. The Pharisees called attention to this and wanted Jesus to reprove the disciples, because, according to their thought, this simple process was labor—work—reaping and thrashing and winnowing. Jesus resisted this absurd mis-

interpretation of the law and by his arguments proved to anyone willing to be taught that they had mistaken the divine intention—had mistranslated the law of the Sabbath. On several occasions he healed the sick on the Sabbath day. Indeed, the majority of his healings were done on that day, greatly to the disgust of the Pharisees, who claimed that he was a lawbreaker in so doing. We cannot suppose that Jesus performed these miracles to aggravate the Pharisees; rather we are to understand that their Sabbath day typified the great Sabbath of blessing and healing—the antitypical Sabbath which is in the future—the period of the Messianic reign and the healing of all earth's sorrows.

Jesus clearly pointed out to the scribes and Pharisees that they were misinterpreting the meaning of the divine arrangement, that God did not make man merely to keep a Sabbath, but that he had made the Sabbath for, in the interest of, mankind. Hence everything necessary for man's assistance would be lawful on the Sabbath day, however laborious it might be. Indeed, Jesus carried the thought still farther and pointed out to his hearers the absurdity of their position—for, he said, if any of you should have an ox or an ass fall into the pit on a Sabbath day, would you leave him to die and thus suffer loss, as well as allow the animal to be in pain? Assuredly they would not, and assuredly they would be justified in helping any creature out of trouble on that day. Then said Jesus, If so much might be done for a dumb creature, might not a good work of mercy and help for mankind be properly enough done on the Sabbath day?

THE SEVENTH DAY STILL A SABBATH

A mistake made by many Christians is the supposition that the Law Covenant which God made with Israel ceased, passed away. On the contrary, as the Apostle declares, "The Law hath dominion over a man so long as he liveth." The Jewish law is as obligatory upon the Jew today as it was upon his fathers in the days of Moses. Only death could set the Jew free from that Law Covenant until, in God's due time, it shall be enlarged and made what God, through the Prophet, styles a New Covenant—a New Law Covenant. That will take place just as soon as the Mediator of the New Covenant shall have been raised up from amongst the people. That Prophet will be like unto Moses, but greater—the antitype. That Prophet will be the glorified Christ—Jesus the Head and the completed church, who are frequently spoken of as members of his body, and sometimes styled the bride, the Lamb's wife. This antitypical Mediator (Acts 3:22, 23), under the New Law Covenant which he will then establish, will assist the Jews (and all who who come into harmony with God through him) back to that human perfection in which they will be able to keep the divine law perfectly in every particular. This great Mediator, Messiah, will for a thousand years carry on this great work.

This Mediator is not yet completed. The Head has passed into glory centuries ago, but the body, the church, awaits a completeness of membership and resurrection change—to be made "like him and see him as he is" and share his glory and his work.

Meantime the Law Covenant is still in force upon every Jew; but it is not in force upon any but Jews, as it never has been in force upon any other people. During these eighteen centuries, between the death of Christ and the inauguration of the New Covenant, Jesus, as the great High Priest, is offering the "better sacrifices" mentioned by St. Paul (Heb. 9:23) and described in type in Leviticus 16. The first part of the great High Priest's sacrifice was the offering of the human body which he took for the purpose when he was made flesh—"a body hast thou prepared me" "for the suffering of death." (Heb. 9:5; 2:9) The second part of his "better sacrifices" is the offering of his mystical body—the church. This work has been in progress since Pentecost. To the consecrated ones who approach the Father through him he becomes the Advocate. He accepts them as his members on the earth; and their sufferings thenceforth are his sufferings so fully that he could say of them to Saul of Tarsus, "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?" "I am Jesus whom thou persecutest." These, accepted as his representatives in the flesh, their blemishes covered by their Advocate's merit, are begotten, by the Heavenly Father, of the holy Spirit to be members of the new creation—the spiritual body of Christ, of which he is the Head.

We remarked that the Sabbath day, still in full force and its observance obligatory upon the Jew, is not upon other nationalities. We should modify this statement by the remark that there are some who mistakenly endeavor to be Jews and try to get under the Law Covenant provisions as Sabbath-keepers, etc. St. Paul recognized this tendency in his day. Note his words to the Christians of Galatia, who were not by nature Jews but Gentiles. He says, "Ye that desire to be under the law, do ye not hear the law?" "Oh, foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you?" He proceeds to show them that the Jews are in bondage to their law and can never get eternal life under it until the Mosaic Law Covenant shall ultimately be merged into the Messianic New Law Covenant. His argument then is that if the Jew cannot get life in keeping the law, it would be foolish for Gentiles to think that they could secure divine favor and everlasting life by keeping that law. He declares, "By the deeds of the Law shall no flesh be justified in God's sight." The only way to obtain justification in God's sight is by the acceptance of Christ and by a full consecration to be his disciples and to join with him in his covenant of sacrifice—as it is written, "Gather together my saints unto me, saith the Lord, those who have made a covenant with me by sacrifice" (Psa. 50:5); and again, "I beseech you, brethren, present your bodies living sacrifices, holy and acceptable to God, your reasonable service."—Romans 12:1.

CHRISTIANS AND THE LAW SABBATH

St. Paul did not mean that Christians should not strive to keep the divine law, but that they should not put themselves under it as a covenant, nor think that by striving to oppose the Law Covenant they would get or maintain harmony with God and gain the reward of everlasting life. On the contrary, he declares in so many words, "The righteousness of the Law is fulfilled in us who are walking, not after (or according to) the flesh, but after (or according to) the spirit." (Romans 8:4) His meaning is clear. The Decalogue was never given to Christians, but it is quite appropriate that Christians should look back to that Decalogue and note the spirit of its teachings and strive to conform their lives thereto in every particular.

But what is the spirit of the Decalogue? Our Lord Jesus clearly set it forth to be—"Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy mind, with all thy being, with all thy strength, and thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." St. Paul says that our Lord not only kept that law, but that he magnified it, or showed it to have greater proportions than the Jews ever supposed it had—length and breadth, height and depth beyond the ability of fallen humanity to perform; moreover, the Apostle declares that our Lord Jesus made that law honorable. The Jews having tried to keep the divine law for more than sixteen centuries had reason to doubt if anyone could keep it in a way satisfactory to God. But the fact that Jesus did keep the law perfectly, and that God was satisfied with his keeping of it, made the law honorable—proved that it was not an unreasonable requirement—not beyond the ability of a perfect man.

Jesus showed the spirit or deeper meaning of several of the commandments; for instance, the command, Thou shalt do no murder, he indicated would be violated by anyone's becoming angry and manifesting in any degree an injurious or murderous spirit. (See also 1 John 3:15) The commandment respecting adultery our Lord declares could be violated by the mind without any overt act—the simple desire to commit adultery if an opportunity offered would be a violation of the spirit of that command. It is this magnified conception of the Ten Commandments that the Apostle says Christians are better able to appreciate than were the Jews, because of having received the begetting of the holy Spirit. And it is this highest conception of the divine law which is fulfilled in us (Christians—footstep followers of Jesus) who are walking through life, not according to the flesh and its desires and promptings, but according to the spirit—the spirit of the divine law, the spirit which the Father hath sent forth into our hearts—the desire to be like him who is the fountain of love and purity.

THE SPIRIT OF THE SABBATH

And there is another or deeper meaning to the other commandments than was understood by the Jews; so it is also with the fourth, which enjoins the keeping of the Seventh day as a day of rest or Sabbath. The word Sabbath signifies rest, and its deeper or antitypical meaning to the Christian is the rest of faith. The Jew, unable to keep the Mosaic law and unable, therefore, to get everlasting life under the Law Covenant, was exhorted to flee to Christ; and, by becoming dead to the Law Covenant, by utterly renouncing it, he was privileged to come into membership in Christ—become sharer in the covenant of sacrifice. So doing, he was promised rest from the law and its condemnation, because "to them that are in Christ there is no condemnation"—the merit of Christ covers the shortcomings of all those who are striving to walk in his steps, and the divine Spirit and Word give them the assurances of divine favor, which ushers them into peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ—ushers them into rest. Thus the Apostle declares, "We which believe do enter into (Sabbath) rest."—Hebrews 4:3.

Moreover, the Apostle indicates that although we enter into

a rest of faith now, through faith and obedience to Christ, Christians have a still greater rest awaiting them beyond their resurrection, when they shall enter into the Lord—the rest, the perfection, on the spirit plane, attained, as the Apostle describes, by resurrection—"sown in weakness, raised in power; sown in dishonor, raised in glory; sown an animal body, raised a spirit body."

FIFTIETH DAY AND FIFTIETH YEAR

Here we are reminded that Israel had two systems of Sabbaths—one of Sabbath days and the other of Sabbath years. The Sabbath days began to count in the Spring. It was a multiple of seven. Seven times seven days (forty-nine days) brought them to the Jubilee day, the fiftieth day, which was styled Pentecost. It is scarcely necessary to call attention to the fulfilment of the antitype of this. Pentecost never had its true meaning until the Lord, as "the first-fruits of them that slept," arose from the dead. Then immediately the seven times seven, plus one, began to count, and on the fiftieth day the holy Spirit was shed abroad upon all those "Israelites indeed" who, already consecrated, were waiting in the upper room for the antitypical High Priest to make satisfaction for their sins and to shed forth upon them the holy Spirit, as the evidence of their restoration to divine favor. Immediately they had peace with God. Immediately they entered into rest. Immediately they realized that they were children of God, begotten of the holy Spirit, that they might in due time become joint-heirs with Jesus Christ their Lord. And is it not true that all down throughout this Gospel age all who follow in the footsteps of Jesus and the disciples, all who renounce sin, trust in Jesus and fully consecrate their lives to him, become recipients of the holy Spirit and similarly enter into his rest? Only those who have entered into this rest and joy of the holy Spirit can fully appreciate the matter.

Now let us glance at the year Sabbath. Every seventh year the land had its rest. And seven times seven (forty-nine) brought them up to the fiftieth year or the Year of Jubilee, in which year all debts were cancelled and each Israelite returned to his own inheritance. It was a year of rest, peace, joy. That Jubilee pictures the glorious Restitution Times of Messiah's kingdom, which, we believe, are nigh, even at the door. When these times shall be ushered in, all the faithful followers of Jesus will have reached the heavenly condition, to be forever with the Lord. Their rest (Sabbath keeping) will have reached its completion, its perfection, and throughout that antitypical Jubilee the blessings of divine favor will be gradually extended to the whole world, that every creature desirous of coming into harmony with God may enter into the rest which God has provided for the poor, groaning creation through the great Redeemer.

THE CHRISTIAN'S SUNDAY SABBATH

From what we have already seen it is manifest that God has put no Sabbath obligations upon the Christian—neither for the seventh day nor for any other day of the week. He has, however, provided for him a rest in the Lord, which is typified by the Jewish Sabbath day. Do we ask upon which day we should celebrate this rest? We answer that we should be in this heart attitude of joy, rest, peace in the Lord and in his finished work, every day. So, then, the Christian, instead of having a Sabbath rest day, as the Jew, has rest perpetual—every day. And instead of its being merely a rest for his body, it is better—a rest for his soul, a rest for his entire being. It can be enjoyed wherever he may be, "at home or abroad, on the land or the sea," for "as his days may demand, shall his rest ever be." This is the spiritual antitype to the spiritual Israelite, of the law Sabbath given to the natural Israelites. Whoever quibbles for the day Sabbath of the Jew shows clearly that he has not understood nor appreciated as yet, to the full at least, the antitypical Sabbath which God has provided for the spiritual Israel through Christ.

But is there not a compulsion to the Christian to observe one day in the week sacred to the Lord? Yes, we answer; there is an obligation upon him such as there is upon no one else in the world. He is obligated by his Covenant to the Lord to keep every day sacred to the Lord. Every day he is to love the Lord his God with all his heart, with all his mind, with all his being, with all his strength; every day he is to love his neighbor as himself. And while striving to the best of his ability to conform to this spirit of the divine law, and while realizing that the blood of Jesus Christ our Redeemer cleanses us from all imperfections contrary to our intentions—these may rest in the peace and joy of the Lord continually. "We which believe do enter into rest."

There is no day of the week commanded to the spiritual Israelite as respects physical or mental rest—the latter they may have always, and the former may be ordered by human regulations for one day or for another. The Christian is commanded to be subject to the laws that be, in all such matters as are non-essential, not matters of conscience.

THE RIGHT USE OF LIBERTY

Let us remember, however, that our liberty in Christ is the liberty from the weight and condemnation of sin and death. Let us not think specially of a liberty from the Jewish restraints of the Seventh day nor think especially of the fact that no day above another has been commanded upon Christians in the Bible. Let us rather consider this liberty as of minor consequence and importance as compared with our liberation from the power of sin and death.

If one day or another be set apart by human law-givers, let us observe their commands. Let us be subject to every ordinance of men. In Christian lands generally the first day of the week is set apart by law. Shall we ignore this law and claim that God has put no such law upon us and that we should have our liberty to do business, etc.? Nay, verily; rather, on the other hand, let us rejoice that there is a law which sets apart one day in seven for rest from business, etc. Let us use that day as wisely and as well as we are able for our spiritual upbuilding and for assistance to others. What a blessing we have in this provision! How convenient it makes it for us to assemble ourselves together for worship, praise, the study of the divine Word! And if earthly laws provided more than one Sabbath (rest) day in the week we might well rejoice in that also, for it would afford us that much more opportunity for spiritual refreshment and fellowship.

Nor should our knowledge of the liberty we enjoy in Christ ever be used in such a manner that it might stumble others. Our observance of the Sabbath enjoined by the law of the land should be most complete—to the very letter—that our good be not evil spoken of—that our liberty in Christ and freedom from the Mosaic law be not misunderstood to be a business or pleasure license, but a privilege and opportunity for the worship and service of the Lord, and the building up of the brethren in the most holy faith, "once delivered to the saints."

WHO CHANGED THE SABBATH DAY?

Often the question is asked, Who changed the Sabbath day to Sunday? The proper answer is that nobody changed it. The seventh day (Saturday) is still as obligatory upon the Jew as it ever was.

The early Christians observed the seventh day for a long time because it was the law of the land, which gave them a favorable opportunity for meeting for praise, prayer and the study of God's Word. In addition, the fact that Jesus arose from the dead on the first day of the week, and that he met with them on that day, led them to meet again and again on the first day, in hope that he would again appear; thus gradually it became a custom for them to meet on that day for Christian fellowship. In this way, so far as we know, both the first day and the seventh day of the week were observed by Christians for quite a time, but neither was understood to be obligatory—a bondage. Both days were privileges. And as many other days of the week as circumstances would permit were used in praising God and building one another up in the most holy faith, just as God's people are doing, or should be doing, in this, our day.

Are we told that a pope once designated that the first day of the week should be observed by Christians as the Christian Sabbath? We answer that this may be so, but that neither popes nor any beings, not even the apostles, could have right to add to or to take from the Word of God. St. Paul particularly warned the church against coming into bondage to the Jewish customs of observing new moons and Sabbaths as though these were obligations upon Christians. The Son of God has made us free—free indeed. But our freedom from the Law Covenant of Israel enables us the more and the better to observe the very spirit of the divine law daily, hourly, and to present our bodies living sacrifices, holy and acceptable to God through the merit of our Redeemer.

DEEDS, NOT WORDS

"They do the least
Who talk the most,
Whose good designs
Are all their boast;
Let words be few.

"They do the most
Whose lives possess
The sterling stamp
Of righteousness;
For deeds are true."

A FAITH FOUNDATION NECESSARY

LUKE 6:39-49.—JUNE 9.

"Be ye doers of the word and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves."—Jas. 1:22.

The Great Teacher in today's lesson emphasizes the necessity of knowledge and of a faith built thereupon. The blind leading the blind represent the ignorant leading the ignorant into difficulties, into the ditch. In the mental blindness of the past many Christian assumed that the Master here taught that the blind leaders and the blind followers of our day would all fall into the pit of eternal torment, but not so. The thought is that they will stumble and experience injury instead of reaching the desired destination.

The destination sought by the Jews was fellowship with and relationship to God—his highest favor, mentioned to Abraham, saying, "In thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed." St. Paul says of that promise, "Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh, but the election hath obtained it and the rest were blinded." (Rom. 11:7) The entire Jewish race was blinded and turned aside and fell into the pit —into confusion, darkness, separation from God. This was the very matter against which Jesus forewarned them. They were following the lead of the scribes and Pharisees and Doctors of the Law, all of whom were blind leaders who misled their too trusting followers. The disciple or follower will not fare better than his master or leader or teacher; he cannot hope for better results than his leader.

How important, then, that God's people recognize the true Leader, Jesus, that they hear his voice, and heed not the voice of others. In the present, in the ending of this Gospel age, we have a condition of things very similar to that which obtained in the end of the Jewish age. We have many great, learned and wise men in all the denominations of Christendom, as the Jews had in Jesus' day in all their different sects. It is equally important that we take heed that we do not follow blind leaders today—in fact, it is much more important. Why should we follow any of the creeds when now we have the Word of God in such convenient form and when all are able to read it? Who cannot rejoice that recently the Pope issued instructions that the Roman Catholic bishops should encourage Catholics to study the Bible? How it would rejoice us to find the Protestant leaders similarly urging the Word of God upon their peoples!

Alas! on the contrary, we find that many of the great and wise of the principal pulpits of the world are undermining the faith of the people by telling them that the Bible is not divinely inspired, that Moses and the Prophets did not write the books ascribed to them, and hence indirectly saying that Jesus and the Apostles were deceived when they made quotations from the Old Testament and ascribed them to Isaiah, Jeremiah, Moses, Habakkuk, etc. These great men style themselves Higher Critics and endorse the theory of Evolution, that humanity is undergoing a process of evolution from monkey-likeness to God-likeness. They are thus indirectly telling their people that there was no fall from God's image and likeness, that there was no sin committed, no sentence for sin, no Redeemer from sin and its sentence and that restitution is not to be hoped for nor to be desired.—Acts 3:19-21.

Surely the Great Teacher's advice not to follow blind leaders was never more needed than in our day. Blessed will they be who heed the warning, and by it will be guided back to a more thorough study of the words of the Great Teacher, his apostles and the prophets.

HUMILITY A CHARACTER FOUNDATION

The parable of a man with a beam in his own eye trying to pick a mote out of his brother's eye was a forceful method whereby the Master inculcated the necessity of humility on the part of those who would be taught of God. Humility is here as elsewhere put as a foundation virtue. The Latin word for humility is *humus*, ground. This implies that it is the soil out of which other virtues are produced. Those who think they know everything can learn nothing. As Chalmers has said: "The more a man does examine, the more does he discover the infirmities of his own character." As Wheatley remarked, "Ten thousand of the greatest faults in our neighbors are of less consequence to us than one of the smallest in ourselves." A knowledge of our sins and imperfections should make and keep all humanity humble; but how beautiful it is to realize that the perfect Jesus was humble and that all the holy angels are so!

GRAPES OFF A BRAMBLE BUSH

While the Scriptures forbid God's people to judge one another, they do commend to us another kind of judging. We are not to judge in the sense of condemning, sentencing, etc., those who claim to be honest, sincere, reverential, merely because they differ from what we would expect; God knows their hearts and to his own Master each servant must stand or fall eventually.

But while not condemning the heart we are to judge of the outward conduct. The parable which our Lord in this lesson gives respecting the gathering of grapes from bramble bushes illustrates this point. God's people are likened to the grape-vine, which produces no thorns but luscious clusters of fruit. Mankind in general are likened to bramble bushes, ready to scratch, tear, injure, on the slightest provocation, and are merely self-sustaining, not bringing forth fruitage that would be a blessing to others. We are to distinguish between such characters and God's people: "By their fruits shall ye know them."

It is said that at times a bramble bush will be entirely covered by a vine, so that the grapes would appear to be coming from the bush. We are not to be mistaken. A good tree cannot bring forth an evil fruitage, neither can an injurious tree bring forth a good fruitage. The lesson, applied to humanity, is that those who are really God's people cannot live injurious lives or fruitless lives; they must be fruit-bearing else they are none of his. And should we find some of the fruits of the spirit commingling with a thorniness of life, an evil, injurious disposition, we are to assume that in some sense of the word the fruitage is merely put on and does not belong to the bramble-bush character.

It is therefore useless for any man to tell us that he has given his heart to the Lord in fulness of consecration and that he has received the sanctifying influences of the holy Spirit and yet find him rejoicing in sin, taking pleasure in iniquity, injustice, selfishness and a course of life injurious to his neighbors. If his heart be changed the results will be manifest in his daily life, because "out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh."

THE HOUSE ON THE ROCK

The closing parable of this lesson is in full tune with its opening verse. In the first parable the blind who trust to the leadership of the blind fall into the ditch. In the parable now before us the picture is that of a householder. If he be wise he will not build upon the shifting sands, which either a wind storm or a rain storm may undermine, and cause a wreck, but he will seek a solid, rock foundation which will endure the storm.

This parable illustrates two classes of believers. Both hear the Great Teacher's instructions and both believe and both rear faith structures and entertain heavenly hopes. But the one is more prudent, more careful than the other. One seeks for the doctrines and principles of the divine Word, and builds his faith structure upon that true foundation which the divine revelation affords. His faith cannot fail whatever storms may assail; it is surely founded on the divine promises.

The unwise believer takes too much for granted and builds upon the traditions of the elders, the creeds of the dark ages, etc. He fails to appreciate the necessity for having a proper foundation for his faith and his works. In the time of stress and storm with which this age will end all such will find the foundation swept from under their faith structure. There will be a general fall of Babylon, as the Scriptures declare—everything not well founded upon the sure Word of God will give way; "That day shall declare it." St. Paul mentions the same class and applies the lesson specially to our day in his letter to the Corinthians. Those whose faith structure will fail will thereby suffer great loss, though they themselves may be saved as by fire—through great tribulation.—1 Cor. 3:13-15.

GENERAL CONVENTION JUNE 1-9

PERTLE SPRINGS, MO. (CHAUTAUQUA GROUNDS)

This convention has been specially arranged for the convenience of Bible students within a radius of a thousand miles from Kansas City. We have no doubt, however, that many will be in attendance from still greater distances. The place itself is ideal and strictly first-class in every particular. It borders a beautiful lake and has free access to the health-giving spring from which it takes its name.

Many will be able to attend this convention who could not conveniently come to one in the East by reason of the cost in money and time. Our expectation is that this will be one of

our most enjoyable conventions. We never had a better situation as respects conditions surrounding, quiet, etc.

The proprietors of the Chautauqua are also the owners of a large hotel there and of rooming flats in Warrensburg. They guarantee comfortable accommodations for a thousand persons at $1.50 a day. Aside from this we are arranging with private householders in Warrensburg for as many more at $1.00 each, two in a room. The round-trip fare to Pertle Springs daily will make the amount $1.10. However, none would best reckon on less than $1.25 per day.

Excursion rates are already in operation, but these are being extended so that a fare of not more than four cents per mile for the round-trip may be expected to be in operation by the time you receive this notice

The speakers for the convention will include some of the very best. Brother Rutherford will be Chairman, and Brother Russell will be in attendance also. The sessions will begin Sunday, June 2, at the Springs, continue there throughout the week and adjourn to conclude at Kansas City June 9.

Decide as quickly as possible whether or not you will attend this convention. If you decide to attend, write immediately to the Society's representative, N. Engle, Warrensburg, Mo., stating what priced accommodations you desire and, if you will not be staying the entire time, which days you will be in attendance.

We hope for a grand reunion at Pertle Springs and for a season of spiritual refreshment. To this end we exhort all who attend to come praying that the Lord will bless them, not only in receiving a blessing, but also in dispensing one to others. We are sure, as on other occasions, not to go away empty, but to carry with us spiritual blessings for the refreshment of those at home not permitted to attend.

HARVESTERS' DAY AT THE CONVENTION

The program for the convention includes a "Harvest Workers' Day." Noting this, one dear friend who has received great spiritual profit through the colporteur service has proffered assistance to all the colporteurs of the Society in attendance to the extent of $5—to all who shall have been in the regular colporteur work for at least three months prior to the convention. We have no doubt that this proposal will be helpful to some who might not otherwise be able to bear the expense. The money is deposited with the Colporteur Department and will be credited on the accounts or handed over in money, as may best suit the convenience of the receivers.

"LEAST IN THE KINGDOM"

MATTHEW 11:2-19.—JUNE 16.

"Amongst them that are born of woman there is none greater than John; yet the least in the kingdom of God is greater than he."—Luke 7:28.

It would be difficult to express in words a higher tribute to John the Baptist than Jesus paid him in our text. Again he said, "There hath not risen a greater Prophet than John the Baptist." If then John was so holy a man, so great a man from the divine standpoint, why did our Lord in this text declare that the least in the kingdom of heaven would be greater than John? This text has puzzled Bible exponents for many a day. It has seemed to many to be contradictory.

But just as soon as we turn on the light contained in that word "kingdom," the entire subject becomes clear. God had promised a Messianic kingdom, and Jesus had come that he might be the Head of that kingdom. The steps leading to the kingdom honors and glories were steps of obedience to God, even unto death, and these steps Jesus had begun to take. On the cross he declared, "It is finished." He had finished the work of proving Himself loyal to God and to the truth even unto death on the cross.

Jesus thus became the Great Conqueror, the great High Priest, the great King of Glory, being exalted to the heavenly state in his resurrection. But, as the Great King, he was to have associated with him in his throne, his bride class. As the Great Priest, he was to have an under-priesthood, a "royal priesthood." As the Great Judge of the world, he was to have associates; as St. Paul declares, "Know ye not that the saints shall judge the world?"—1 Cor. 6:2.

In the divine plan this company of associates with Jesus in his glorious kingdom were as much foreknown and foreordained as was he and his share in the kingdom. As it was necessary for him to undergo trials and testings of loyalty unto death, so it must be with the class called to be his associates —"He was tempted in all points like as we are." Thus his message is, "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I overcame and am set down with my Father in his throne." These would be followers in his footsteps, none could precede him. His work was necessary first, to open up for his followers a new and living way, through the veil—that is to say, through his flesh—through his sacrifice.

"SOME BETTER THING FOR US"

While about five hundred brethren became Jesus' consecrated followers during his earthly ministry, they were not then accepted of the Father as sons, and not begotten of the holy Spirit until Pentecost. God would not recognize any as sons until Jesus had finished his sacrifice, and, as the great Advocate, "Appeared in the presence of God for us"—as our Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the Righteous. John did not belong to this class, just as Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and all the prophets did not belong to it. In God's providence their reward will be different from that of the church—theirs will be an earthly reward. They will be resurrected to human perfection. They will have to do with the human phase of the kingdom, which amongst men will represent Messiah and the church, who will be spirit beings, but invisible to men, and whose dealings with mankind will be through those noble characters, the ancient worthies.

We are not to infer that those glorious characters mentioned in the Scriptures who lived before Christ's time were ignoble or less faithful than the Gospel church, but merely that God promised them the earthly perfection, while he has promised the bride of Christ the heavenly perfection, to attain perfection gradually during the thousand years of Messiah's reign; the record is that they will come forth as perfect human beings. That will be the reward of their faithfulness. St. Paul explains the entire matter in Hebrews, the 11th chapter. He tells of the faith and heroism of those Ancient Worthies and that "they had this testimony, that they pleased God." There will be no necessity for testing them in the future. Their acceptance with God is already proven and declared.

Nevertheless, in God's order the earthly kingdom and restitution blessings for the world cannot begin until the kingdom class, Christ and the church, shall first be completed. Thus the Apostle declares, "All these died in faith, not having received the (earthly) things promised to them, God having provided some better thing for us (the church), that they, without us, should not be made perfect." The glorification of the church, her resurrection to perfection, must first be accomplished before the blessings through them can proceed to the natural seed of Abraham, and then through Israel to all nations.—Heb. 11:38-40.

NOT THE BRIDE BUT THE FRIEND

John the Baptist seemed to either comprehend the situation, or else he spoke the truth by prophecy when he declared "He that hath the bride is the Bridegroom, but the friend of the Bridegroom, hearing his voice, rejoiceth greatly. This my joy is fulfilled." He perceived that in God's providence he had a very honorable and blessed station and work to accomplish, but he was to be neither the Bridegroom nor a member of the bride class.

This does not imply that John was disappointed at the time, nor that he and the other ancient worthies will be disappointed when they come forth in the resurrection to find a bride class selected to a higher place than theirs. On the contrary, their cup of blessing being full, and never having been begotten of the holy Spirit to a spirit nature, they will not be able to comprehend or appreciate any blessings higher than their own. Just, for instance, as a fish in the water, seeing a bird flying in the air, would not be jealous of the bird and its greater freedom, but, on the contrary, would be better satisfied in the water, its natural element, so all natural men, not begotten of the holy Spirit, will appreciate more the earthly blessings which divine providence has provided for them.

In this very lesson Jesus intimates all the above, saying, "The law and the prophets were until John." He was the last of the prophets. He introduced Jesus, the Head of the kingdom class. Jesus further declared, "If ye are willing to receive it, this is Elias which was to come." That is to say, Those of you who are able to appreciate the matter may understand that John the Baptist did a work which was in full accord with the prophecy which declared Elijah must first come and do a reformatory work before Messiah would come.

CURIOSITY IS NOT RELIGION

Addressing the multitudes the Great Teacher inquired, Why did you go out to the wilderness to see John? Was it to hear

his message? Was it because God spoke through him as a Prophet as the wind makes music through the reeds? Or did you go out to see a man in fine clothing and of kingly state?

What really drew to the wilderness to John's teachings was that he was God's Prophet; as it is written, "Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, who shall prepare the way before thee." This preparation for Jesus John made with the Jewish nation. His message was that the kingdom of heaven was about to be offered to them, and that only the holy would be ready to receive it.

But neither John nor his hearers fully realized in what way the kingdom would be offered to the people, namely, that it would be an offer, first, of a place or share in the kingdom, and that the terms would be full consecration to the Lord, to walk "the narrow way." Jesus again testified, "If ye had received John ye would have received me."

In other words, all who received John's message were such as were in heart condition to receive Jesus; and the same spirit of indifference which permitted Herod to imprison John and to finally behead him marked the Jewish leaders and their unbelief. John as a Prophet was abstemious to the extreme, and they said, "He hath a devil." Jesus presented himself less peculiarly, eating and drinking and being clothed as other people, and of him they said, "Behold a gluttonous man and a wine-bibber, a friend of publicans and sinners." Thus was it demonstrated that the fault was not in the manifestation of God's providence, but in the hearts of the majority of the Jews.

SOME INTERESTING QUESTIONS

MESSIAH'S KINGDOM WILL BE SPIRITUAL

Question—What is meant by Messiah's kingdom?

Answer.—Our understanding is that Messiah's kingdom will be a spiritual one, invisible to mortals, yet all-powerful for the accomplishment of the great things promised in the law and the prophets. The empire which he will establish, invisible to men, will take the place of the empire of Satan, likewise invisible. The King of Glory will replace the prince of darkness. Principal amongst Messiah's earthly agents and representatives will be Abraham, Isaac and all the prophets, raised to full, human perfection. Instead of their being, as heretofore, the fathers, they shall be the children of Messiah, whom he will make "princes in all the earth." (Psa. 45:16) To this kingdom the nation of Israel will speedily unite. Eventually every nation will come into harmony with Messiah, and all people will be privileged to come in under Israel's New Covenant, then established by the great "Messenger of the Covenant, whom ye delight in."—Jer. 31:31-34; Mal. 3:1-3.

The glorious Messiah, whom the Jews identify with "Michael, the great Prince, which standeth for thy people" (Dan. 12:1), the Mohammedans also expect, and identify him with Mohammed of the past. The Free Masons also expect the same glorious personage and, in their traditions, identify him with Hiram Abiff, the great Master Mason. This same great Messiah, Michael, the Archangel, the antitypical Melchizedek, Priest as well as King, we identify as "the Man Jesus Christ, who gave himself a ransom-price for all, to be testified in due time."—1 Tim. 2:6.

But when the Great King shall appear in his glory and establish his kingdom with Israel, he will be, as promised by the prophets, "The desire of all nations." (Hag. 2:7) Then all the blinded eyes shall be opened and all the deaf ears shall be unstopped. (Isa. 35:5) Then, who he is, and how he should be identified with Abraham's seed and David's line, will be clearly known to all in heaven and all on earth. Not now, but when the King shall reign in righteousness, all shall fully understand the significance of Zechariah's prophecy (12:7-10) and of Psa. 22:16. Content that Messiah shall show the truth in his day of revealment, we are glad to point Jews, Mohammedans, Christians, all, to the glorious Messiah, and the great work of blessing for all the nations, which God will accomplish, through the seed of Abraham, according to his covenant and his oath.

PERFECTION WILL INSURE PROTECTION AGAINST ACCIDENTS

Question.—Will there be accidents and death during the Millennial aside from those of sinners going into the second death?

Answer.—While the reign of Christ will be a reign of righteousness unto life, we are not to understand that Adamic death will be at an end as soon as Messiah has begun his reign, for it is stated that he must reign until he has put down all enemies. (1 Cor. 15:25, 26) It is understood that people will be more or less in the Adamic death during the thousand years and will rise gradually out of Adamic imperfection and death to the perfection of the human nature. We should remember that the kingdom as it will be established in the beginning of the Millennial age will consist of the New Jerusalem—that is, the glorified church, of which Christ is the Head. (Rev. 21:1-8) During the thousand years the world will be coming into accord with this arrangement. For all such as will come into harmony there will be a blessed arrangement by which they will be protected from any penalty for imperfections. We may reasonably suppose that after perfection is reached there will be no more accidents, just as we have reason to suppose that in heaven there is no necessity for surgeons, doctors, ambulances, etc. "Nothing shall hurt or destroy in all God's holy mountain [kingdom]." (Isa. 11:9) God's will shall be done on earth as it is done in heaven. We read that there shall be no more sighing and no more crying and no more dying.

THE FINAL TESTING WILL DETERMINE IT

Question.—Will restitution include the right to everlasting life, or will the right to everlasting life be determined by the final testing that will come at the end of the Millennial age?

Answer.—Perfection was given to Adam originally; and by virtue of his perfection he had a right to continue to live, if he were obedient. But as God saw fit to test Father Adam, so he will test the human family. And the final test, after the kingdom shall have been turned over to the Father, will be by way of testing their worthiness to attain these life-rights and to keep them everlastingly. The thousand years of Christ's reign will be for bringing mankind to perfection. At the end of that reign those who have reached perfection will be delivered over to the Father. The New Covenant will have accomplished for them all that it was intended to accomplish. But before God determines them worthy of the fulness of his everlasting life, he will see that all are tried individually and without any Mediator between. We may be sure that the test will be a crucial and a just one.

APPLICABLE TO TWO CLASSES

Question.—To whom is the Apostle speaking when he says, "I beseech you, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies living sacrifices"?—Rom. 12:1.

Answer.—These words are properly applicable to two classes. First, they apply to a class termed "brethren," in the sense that they are no longer opponents, but sympathetically in harmony with the consecrated. The Apostle was urging these to complete the work of grace which they had already begun. Secondly, the text applies to those who have made the consecration, and urges them to complete the work. I urge you, brethren, that day by day you attend to this matter of presenting your bodies living sacrifices until the work be accomplished. This, he says, is a reasonable service, acceptable to God.

Although St. Paul does not say how the great Advocate will make the sacrifice acceptable, yet this is to be understood by Christians, who know that they are accepted in the Beloved. After that class have given up their lives, after they have put all in the Lord's hands, they understand that they, themselves, as members of the body of Christ, are to die daily. Hence it is that daily an opportunity comes to us to lay down life in the Lord's service. While this is a daily dying, yet, in another sense of the word, it is a sacrifice to the end of life. Our Lord Jesus said, "I have a baptism to be baptized with, and how am I straitened until it be accomplished!" (Luke 12:50) In one sense, his sacrifice was accepted at Jordan. In another sense it was day by day until that baptism was completed on the cross and he cried, "It is finished!"

MAY HAVE TWO APPLICATIONS

Question.—"For, behold, the Lord, the Lord of hosts, doth take away from Jerusalem and from Judah the stay and the staff, the whole stay of bread, and the whole stay of water." (Isaiah 3:1) What does this mean?

Answer.—There was a famine which came upon Judea. The people did not have enough to eat or to drink. They are still in very much the condition of Ishmael at the time when Hagar laid him down to die. During the Gospel age the poor Jews have been famishing. They have been without any communication whatever with God.

The same Prophet, from whose inspired writings the above text is taken, tells us of another class whose "bread shall be given them, whose water shall be sure." (Isa. 33:16) They will be well cared for, well protected, and will have both bread and water. The text may have applied to the Jews at the time of the destruction of Jerusalem and may apply to any Jews and others who, since that time, have put their trust in the

Lord and to whom He has supplied what was needed for the strengthening of their lives. As we look about us today we find many of nominal Israel hungry, thirsty. They endeavor to make themselves think that they are well fed; and the majority of them do not realize that they are poor and naked and unfed and blind. In the meantime the Church of Christ is in the protected place. Everything is working together for good to them. Their bread and water is sure. "No good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly"; "the meek will he guide in judgment; the meek will he teach his way."

AND SHE WAS A SINNER

LUKE 7:36-50.—JUNE 23.

"Faithful is the saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners."
1 Timothy 1:15.

The Gospel of Christ is the message of divine compassion toward sinners. All religions recognize sin and propose reconciliation with God—by works of charity, by voluntary self-torture, or by future torments. None of the heathen gods have any touch of sympathy for humanity; they are cold, cruel, vindictive. The Bible, of all the religious books we know of, alone tells of a God touched with the feeling of human infirmities and with sympathy toward sinners. "God commendeth his love toward us in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for the ungodly."—Rom. 5:8.

Note the expressions of the Scriptures indicating divine compassion: "God looked down from his holy habitation to behold and to hear the groaning of the prisoners"—the suffering of humanity under the death penalty, and the incidental aches and pains of our fallen condition. He did more than look, he did more than pity; his right arm of divine power in due time began to bring deliverance for the captives of sin and death. Already he has sent his Son and thus provided a ransom price for the sins of the whole world. Already his Son has been glorified, and merely awaits the time for the establishment of his kingdom.

Meantime divine grace has been still further manifested in the invitation granted to a "little flock," to be justified by faith and to be sanctified by the High Priest's offering of them, and thus to become new creatures, joint-heirs in his kingdom. Still the Scriptures tell us of God's pursuing love and mercy. He is unwilling that any should perish, but wills, on the contrary, that all shall have an opportunity to turn to him that they may have everlasting life. It is for this very purpose that Messiah's kingdom will be established in great glory and with full power. God's right arm is not shortened. In due time it will bring the salvation for which the poor groaning creation has so long waited. It will come with the manifestation of the Sons of God in kingdom power.—Rom. 8:19.

Eventually the Redeemer "shall see of the travail of his soul and be satisfied." Eventually the Heavenly Father's plan will be so outworked that every creature in heaven and earth and under the earth shall be heard saying, "Praise and glory and honor, dominion and might be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb, forever." Eventually God, through the Messianic kingdom, "shall wipe away all tears from off all faces," and cause the reproach of being His people to disappear from the earth. (Rev. 21:4; Isa. 25:8) So superior is this God of the Bible and of Christianity to all the misconceptions of heathendom and Christendom that, when the glorious day of Messiah's kingdom shall have been fully ushered in, the glory of our God will be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together.—Isa. 40:5.

A WOMAN WHO WAS A SINNER

Our Redeemer possessed and exemplified the Heavenly Father's love and mercy. He declared that he was merely the exponent of the Father's will, and hence of the Father's love and sympathy. Our Lord's sympathy is presented not only in this lesson but also in many others, and all of his followers do well to cultivate the same spirit. Jesus was not sympathetic with the sins of the people, but with the people themselves. He realized as few do the real difficulty with the majority of sinners. "Behold, I was shapen in iniquity, in sin did my mother conceive me!" exclaimed the Prophet. We are sinners by heredity. We have inherited partially depraved minds, partially unbalanced brains and morals.

St. Paul, speaking of the very noblest class, declares, "We cannot do the things which we would"—any of us; hence all humanity are sinners. "There is none righteous, no, not one." Therefore it is merely a question of the degree of sinfulness, and the degree is often measured by the degree of inherited weakness, or the degree of surrounding temptations. The really reprehensible and blameworthy sinners are those who sin wilfully, deliberately, knowingly, intentionally, without either will or effort to resist sin. But it is not ours to judge which these are. Indeed, we are incompetent to judge, we cannot read the heart, we cannot fully appreciate the degree of the temptation and the weakness of the tempted. Hence the Master said, "Judge nothing before the time." In due time the saints will judge the world, but not now.

Now we must follow the Master's example; and we may well do this because, although he knew what was in man, as we could not know, he was very charitable, which leads us to suppose that if we were perfect we would be all the more charitable towards sinners, though not at all sympathetic with sin.

Who can read the New Testament Gospel narratives without realizing that Jesus was indeed a "Friend of sinners," as was charged against him by the Pharisees? And is not this the feature of the Bible which specially commends it to humanity? With the exception of the wilful sinners, whom we must hope are few, there comes a time when sin is seen in its true color and is detested. Then is the time when the Gospel message from the friend of sinners specially appeals to such. All seem to know instinctively that Jesus stands ready to be the friend and helper of all who come to the Father through him.

Jesus had accepted an invitation to dine at a Pharisee's house. The dinner had begun. Resting upon one arm they used the other for handling the food. After the custom of the times, they reclined upon low tables or couches, their heads toward the center where the food was placed. A curtain separated the dining room from the outer court.

While the dinner was progressing a woman "who was a sinner," a harlot, deeply penitent, entered. She had in her hand some precious perfume, with which she intended to anoint the Savior's feet, as was sometimes done with dignitaries of that time. Her heart was full, and tears gushed from her eyes while she sought to open the bottle; they fell like rain upon Jesus' feet, evidently quite contrary to the woman's intention. She was dishonoring the very feet she intended to honor. Loosening her hair, she used it as a towel, entirely regardless of the fact that for a woman at that time it was considered dishonorable to let down her hair in public; but intent upon her errand she dried the feet and poured the precious perfume upon them, presumably as an honor to the One from whom she had heard "wonderful words of life"—words of divine compassion and pity for sinners, words of hope for herself.

TWO DEBTORS AND THEIR LOVE

The host of the occasion watched Jesus to see how he would receive this manifestation of loving devotion, saying in his heart, If this man were a prophet, he would know that the woman offering him this honor is disreputable. He would denounce her and bid her, "Begone," and not to touch him. Jesus knew his thoughts and answered him in parabolic form, saying, "A certain creditor had two debtors, one owed five hundred pence and the other fifty. Neither could pay and he forgave them both. Which of them will love him most?" The Pharisee replied, "I suppose he to whom most was forgiven." Jesus agreed with him.

Then Jesus made application of the matter: turning to the woman, he said to his host, Seest thou this woman, who washed my feet with her tears and wiped them with her hair? You are the host of the occasion, yet you did not offer me water for the washing of my feet, as is customary in our land to do to those whom we desire to honor. You gave me no kiss, as is customary amongst friends, but this woman has repeatedly kissed my feet. "You did not anoint my head with oil, but she hath anointed my feet with ointment. Therefore, her sins, which are many, are forgiven, for she loved much; but to whom little is forgiven, the same loveth little." And he said to the woman, "Thy sins are forgiven."

Is not this to some extent an illustration and an explanation of the fact that the majority of those who love the Lord most are such as realize their own sinful and fallen condition most and who appreciate most the forgiving love of God manifested in Jesus? Is it not true today also that those who are most moral, and therefore might be said to have less to be forgiven, have correspondingly less love?

This should not be the case, however. The less degraded ought naturally to be the more able to love and to appreciate divine goodness and love and the more willing to present their little all in divine service.

Those present not improperly began to inquire, Who is this that even forgives sins? The only satisfactory answer is that he is the one he professes to be, the Son of God, the Redeemer of the world. He was then in process of rendering up his sacrifice according to his covenant, and on the strength of that covenant and sacrifice he had authority to tell the woman that her sins were forgiven, because he was making the Atonement which would be applicable to her.

"ARE YE ABLE?"

Are ye able to walk in the narrow, strait way,
With no friend by your side, and no arm for your stay?
Can ye bravely go on through the darkening night?
Can ye patiently wait till the Lord sends the light?

Are ye able to crush your soul's longing for love,
Will ye seek for no friendship save that from above?
Can ye pass through this world, lone, unnoticed, unknown,
While your faith faintly whispers, "He knoweth his own?"

Where the feet of the Blessed One stood, can ye stand?
Can ye follow his steps to a wilderness land?
Are ye able to cast aside pleasure and fame?
Can ye live but to glorify his precious name?

Can ye smile as his dear voice says tenderly, "No,"
When "the field is so white," and your heart yearns to go?
Can ye rest then in silence, contented and still,
Till your Lord, the Chief Reaper, revealeth his will?

Are ye able to lay on the altar's pure flame
That most treasured possession, your priceless good name?
Can ye ask of your Father a blessing for those,
Who see naught in your life but to scorn and oppose?

When the conflict twixt error and truth fiercer grows,
Can ye wield the strong "Sword" against unnumbered foes?
Can ye lift up the "standard" e'en higher and higher,
While his praises ye sing in the midst of the fire?

When ye see the Lord's cause going down to defeat,
Will your courage endure in the seven-fold heat?
Will your faith keep you steadfast, though heart and flesh fail,
As the new creature passes beneath the last "veil"?

Ah, if thus ye can drink of the cup he shall pour,
And if never the banner of truth ye would lower,
His beloved ye are, and his crown ye shall wear,
In his throne ye shall sit, and his glory shall share!

GERTRUDE W. SEIBERT.

SOME INTERESTING LETTERS

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:—

I have just finished reading your sermon in the *Manilla Times*, and it has given me much peace and happiness. I want to learn more of the Bible, but find it obscure so much of the time. In the past I can truthfully say it has been a sealed book to me. But from now on I am going to diligently search the Scriptures for truth and spiritual guidance.

Any reading matter you can send me to help me toward enlightenment will be most gratefully received. If you will tell me where to secure all of your writings on the Bible I shall gladly send the required amount to get them.

We will leave here in June for San Francisco, Cal., where we expect to remain nine or ten months. While there I desire greatly to take up the systematic study of the Bible. Could you recommend to me some school (or person) there under which I could place myself as a Bible student?

May God bless abundantly your great work is my prayer. Faithfully yours, MRS. J. DUCKWORTH-FORD, *Philippines*.

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:—

You will be interested to know a little circumstance which illustrates how the HEAVENLY MANNA can be used of the Lord to draw attention to the truth.

A brother and sister staying at a strange house left their MANNA on the dresser during the day, so that it might be seen. The help looked at it and liked it very much. This led to the sale of several first volumes and the arousing of considerable interest in the truth.

Lovingly your brother, WALTER H. BUNDY.

DEAR BROTHER:—

If you will pardon me for taking a little of your valuable time I would be pleased if you will answer the following question:—

IL DAWN, Vol. 1, page 232, ¶ 1, we read as follows: "Our sins he consented to have imputed to him, that he might bear our penalty for us, and he died on our behalf, as though he were the sinner." In Vol. 5, page 109, line 23, we also read: "Not imputed to them, but imputed to him, who bore our sins in his body on the tree." In Vol. 5, page 444, ¶2, we also read: "That God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them, but imputing them unto him."

Please be kind enough to inform me at your earliest convenience if you have changed your mind as to these teachings, or do you still hold the same views? With earnest prayers that God will be with you and keep you unto the end, I am,

Yours in his dear name, P. L. DERRING,—*Va.*

IN REPLY

Your favor of March 25 is before me I am pleased to answer its question as follows:

The work of Christ is presented from a variety of standpoints, some showing modifications of one kind and some of another; some stating the matter from the human standpoint and some from the divine. What we need in all Scriptural matters is to get at the real import.

From God's standpoint human sin is imputed to Jesus; that is to say, he was provided to be the sinner's representative—to pay the price for the release of man from the death sentence; thus God pictures Christ as the serpent raised upon the pole. Thus the Apostle says he was made sin for us, although he knew no sin—he was a sin-offering.

Viewing the matter from the other standpoint, from the human standpoint, we see our own weaknesses and shortcomings, realizing the necessity of our Master's imputing to us the merit of his sacrifice to make up for our deficiency. Thus the facts agree, whether we state them from one standpoint or another. Our sins were reckoned against Jesus when he died for sin. The righteousness of Christ is imputed to us when we offer ourselves to God and our Great Redeemer and High Priest makes good our deficiency.

With much Christian love,

YOUR BROTHER AND SERVANT IN THE LORD.

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SAUL OF TARSUS AND WHAT HE SAW

Last of all he was seen of me also, as of one born before the due time.—1 Cor. 15:8.

St. Paul was discussing the resurrection of the dead. He realized that on that great fact rested the weight of the Gospel message. It was easy enough to prove that Jesus had died, but to an incredulous world it was difficult to prove that he had risen from the dead; and whoever could not believe that great fact could not believe the other great facts which stand or fall with it.

For instance, the Apostle presented that Jesus had left the heavenly glory and had become a man for the purpose of meeting the demands of the divine law against Adam and his race, involved by him. He could show the reasonableness of this logic. He has proven that as the whole world was condemned to death through Father Adam's disobedience it was absolutely necessary for an untainted life to be sacrificed in order to meet the penalty and to secure the release of the condemned race.

GOD WOULD NOT LEAVE HIS SON IN DEATH

The Apostle had declared that Jesus had been faithful in his ministry in fully laying down his life and that the entire matter was pleasing and acceptable to the Heavenly Father. If so, surely God would not leave his Son in death, but would raise him from the dead. This fact the Apostle had repeatedly enunciated, showing that our Lord entered into his glory and reward and ascended up where he was before—to perfection on the spirit plane.

But all these claims fell lightly upon some of his hearers,

who claimed that it was much more easy to believe that Jesus never died at all, but merely transmuted, than to believe that he died for our sins and rose again for our justification; hence the Apostle's frequent reference to Christ's resurrection and his insistence upon it as absolutely necessary to Christian faith, for not only would the Heavenly Father's favor toward the Lord Jesus thus be shown, but the bulk of all the holy prophecies would remain unfulfilled unless Jesus arose from the dead.

In other words, a dead Redeemer would be of no advantage; matters would be just as unfavorable for the sinners as though Jesus had never come at all. Additionally, if the resurrection of Jesus was a questionable matter, how could those who disputed that great fact acknowledge the resurrection of the church and of the world? St. Paul emphasizes this also, declaring that "there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and of the unjust," as a result of the redemptive work of Jesus—his dying for man's sins and his resurrection to glory to carry out the blessings secured by his death.

"LAST OF ALL HE WAS SEEN BY ME"

Prosecuting his argument, the Apostle marshaled the whole chain of witnesses except the women who first saw the Lord on the morning of His resurrection. He says, "He was seen of Cephas (Peter); then by the remainder of the twelve; then of above five hundred brethren at once; later, he was seen of James; then of all the apostles," when he ascended. Then comes the text: "Last of all he was seen of me also."

There is something pathetic in this reference to his own glimpse of Jesus. It called up the period of his own bigoted persecution of the church. It reminded him of his own responsibility in connection with the death of St. Stephen, and of the blind hatred which led him to persecute inoffensive fellow-creatures, simply because they believed that Jesus died and rose again, the very thing which he was now trying to testify to all having the hearing ear.

His memory went back to the madness which he had manifested in pursuing Christians even to Damascus, haling them to prison. Again he saw the great, blinding light from heaven, above the brightness of the noonday sun, his fall to the earth, and heard the voice speaking to him, saying, "Saul, Saul, why persecute thou me?" (Acts 9:1-9; 26:12-19) Again he remembered his astonishment at learning that those whom he had persecuted were not renegade and deceived Jews, but highly esteemed and acknowledged by this Great One, a glimpse of whom felled him to the earth. Ah, that was a wonderful sight! If Messiah was so great, so glorious, so powerful, he could believe in him, he could reverence him.

The objection which all Jews had to Jesus, and what they considered absolute proof that he was not the Messiah, was his apparent weakness, his apparent inability to accomplish the things foretold by the prophets. They said, It is foolish to think of a man without an army and without wealth claiming to be a king. It is still more foolish for him to claim that he is the Messianic king, who is to be above all kings, and before whom every knee shall bow and every tongue confess. They said, therefore, that Jesus must either be beside himself, crazy, or else he was seeking to deceive the people and temporarily create a little commotion of popularity.

To them it seemed that when he was crucified a demonstration had been given that he was not the Messiah. Was not the Messiah to live forever, and was he not to reign successfully as King of kings and Lord of lords? Was it not, therefore, proven that any man whom the Jews or the Romans could crucify, could put to death, must have been an imposter? They considered the matter proven to a demonstration. The persecution of the followers of Jesus was merely with a view to stamping out a new religion, which, it was feared, would do harm to Israel in that it would call in question the hopes of Israel respecting a coming King and his kingdom. Thus Saul of Tarsus had felt himself fully justified in persecuting all of that way of thinking—for "the good of the cause," as so many persecutors have said.

A NEW VIEW OF MATTERS

The honesty of Saul of Tarsus led him to be just as honest after he got his eyes of understanding open as he had previously been with them closed. It took him a little while to get the proper focus; then he saw and could explain to others the necessity for the death of Jesus and how it was typified in the sacrifices of the law and how the divinely arranged plan had made this great sacrifice in order thereby to more fully show forth the divine justice, wisdom, love and power.

Now he saw, not only the need for Jesus to come in the flesh and to give himself a ransom-price for all, but he saw equally the necessity for his resurrection, not in the flesh, but in the spirit, that he might be a fully qualified Ruler and Savior—not only to save his people from the Romans, the Assyrians, and from all other human enemies, but also to save them from Satan, from sin, from sickness, from sorrow, from death. Ah, now he saw how great Messiah must be in order to meet the necessities of the case!

The matter changed immediately in his mind; instead of a human Savior and Messiah and an earthly king, God had prepared a Heavenly One, partaker of the divine nature, glorious, far above angels, principalities and powers and every name that is named. Now he saw that the sufferings of Jesus had a twofold value. First, they were necessary for man's release from the death sentence, and, secondly, they were necessary as a demonstration of the loyalty of Jesus. Now he saw that God, in preparing to bring many sons to glory, determined first to prove the loyalty of him whom he had invited to become the Captain of our Salvation, and that this was done by the arrangement which necessitated Jesus' death.

The climax of the argument was reached when he found that God not only had raised up Jesus from the dead, but that additionally he had bestowed upon him the glory, honor and immortality of the divine nature, of which Saul had a demonstration or proof in the blinding flash of light which felled him to the earth, and in the voice which said to him alone, "I am Jesus, whom thou persecutest."

CROWN HIM LORD OF ALL

We like to think that, as we were once blinded to many of the precious truths of God's Word, so it is with many others whose eyes of understanding have not yet opened. We like to think of St. Paul's experiences, his sincerity, even to hatred and persecution, and then his loyalty, even to stripes and imprisonment and death. We like to think of him as exemplifying possibly a large class of the opposers of the truth.

We like to hope that all they will need to bring them into line with God's arrangements and to make them loyal servants of righteousness will be the great light which will shine forth resplendently very soon, when the due time shall come for Messiah to take to himself his great power and reign—when his elect bride shall have been completed and glorified with him. We like to remember the words of the Lord through the Prophet respecting that glorious Epoch: "Then shall the eyes of the blind be opened, and the ears of the deaf be unstopped; then shall the lame man leap as an hart and the tongue of the dumb sing"—in that day.

Where would Saul of Tarsus have ended his career if the great Redeemer had not interposed for his help? And how poorly we would have fared and how little of the Light divine would we have seen if divine providence had not helped us in various ways? And so with the world. It is beyond our power to give the hearing ear or the seeing eye. This is the work of the Great Physician, and his day for healing and blessing and uplifting the world we perceive to be nigh, even at the door.

Ah, yes! Now we can see that the little opening of the eyes and unstopping of the ears and healing of the lame accomplished at our Lord's first advent merely foreshadowed his coming glory and much greater work. Now we can see a reason why so many of his mighty works were done on the Sabbath days—because they were all prophetic, as the Sabbath days themselves were prophecies of the great thousand-year Sabbath of Messiah's glorious reign, during which all of humanity who will may enter into his rest—rest from sin and from Satan and from everything that would hinder them from a full return to the Heavenly Father's love and favor and to everlasting life.

Now we see that the great work of that thousand-year Sabbath will be the healing of the morally lame and the giving of sight and hearing to the minds now blinded and deaf under the evil influences of the great adversary—"the god of this world [who] hath blinded the minds of them that believe not."—2 Corinthians 4:4.

ONE BORN BEFORE THE TIME

Many have remarked at the peculiarity of St. Paul's statement that he saw the Lord as one prematurely born. But, if at first the statement was dark and puzzling, now it is luminous and enlightening. His thought is this: the time for giving ocular demonstrations of the Lord's resurrection had gone by; the next manifestation of Him is to be to his saints, and after that to the world. Thus we read: "We shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is"—made like him by our resurrection change from the human conditions to the spirit conditions; yea, to the divine plane.

Strictly speaking, then, the experiences of Saul of Tarsus were out of the ordinary. No one else than he alone, not

even the saintly, were to see the Lord before their resurrection change, in the end of this age. When, therefore, he saw Jesus, he saw him before the time—more than eighteen centuries before the time. Moreover, he saw him as one born before the time—as one resurrected before the time. We are to have in mind the Scriptural use of this word born—that the church must all be begotten of the holy Spirit in order to experience the resurrection birth.

Thus, concerning our Redeemer's resurrection, we read: "He was the first-born from the dead"; and again, "He was the first-born of many brethren." So the hope of all of God's people is that the begetting of the holy Spirit in the present time will be followed by the resurrection birth, which St. Paul describes in this same chapter, saying, "It is sown in weakness, it is raised in power; it is sown an animal body, it is raised a spirit body."—1 Cor. 15:43.

With these things before our mental eye we see the meaning of the Apostle in the words: "He was seen of me, also, as one born before the time." He was not thus seen by the other apostles. They saw him merely as he appeared—sometimes in one form of body and with appropriate clothing, at other times in another form, and with diverse clothing. He appeared and disappeared, but they did not see him, the new creature; they saw merely the various forms in which he appeared. But St. Paul saw the Lord more nearly as all the saints shall see him when they shall be born from the dead by the glorious resurrection change.

CHURCH'S GLORY TO BE GREATER THAN THAT OF THE ANGELS

One great difference between the effect of what Saul saw and what the entire glorious church will see in the resurrection is that Saul's eyesight was injured by the sight; besides, he saw nothing very distinctly—merely a blinding light, which the voice explained to be the appearance or manifestation of Jesus. Far more precious will be the experiences of the church. Before beholding him who is declared to be "the express image of the Father's person," "whom no man hath seen nor can see, dwelling in light which no man can approach unto"—before this, we shall have been changed, glorified. This will enable us to see him as he is, for the glory of the church will be like to the glory of her Lord, and superior to the glory of the angels.

While heavenly glory does not consist exclusively of brightness, nevertheless the Scriptures everywhere seem to associate bright-shining with the heavenly ones, and would imply that the higher the station and rank the brighter will be the sheen, the glory. Thus the glory of the Heavenly Father is represented as being so great that few could endure it; and angels and seraphim are represented as veiling their faces before the divine glory, which so greatly transcends their own.

It should not, therefore, surprise us that the Scriptures everywhere represent that our Lord Jesus and the church, "made partakers of the divine nature" (2 Peter 1:4), will have a great honor and brightness, far above that of angels and all others except that of the Heavenly Father. As the Lord Jesus was able to veil the glories of his person and to appear as a man after his resurrection, so undoubtedly he could do as respects the world, during the thousand years of his Messianic reign.

And, similarly, it would be possible for the church to appear as men with the glory veiled. It might appear at first as though this was what was signified through the Mosaic type when Moses, representing Messiah in glory, came down from the mountain, his face radiant, but veiled for the sake of the people. Our thought, however, is that Jesus and the church will never thus appear in the flesh as angels have done in the past, but that on the contrary the ancient worthies, perfected on the human plane, will be their agents and representatives in all communications with mankind. Thus, "the law shall go forth from Mount Zion (the spirit kingdom), and the Word of the Lord from Jerusalem" (the earthly kingdom), to every nation, people, kindred and tongue, that all may be blest if they will and attain everlasting life.

QUICKENING OF THE MORTAL BODY

"If the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead will also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you."—Rom. 8:11.

Every text should be considered in the light of its context. In the Epistle to the Romans, the Apostle's argument is that by nature we are all sinners; and that God's proposition is that he will accept us as sons on a new plane if our lives be offered in consecration: "I beseech you, therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service."—Rom. 12:1.

After an individual has made this presentation of his body for sacrifice, and he has been begotten of the holy Spirit, the mortal body is counted as being dead, and his mind, his will, is reckoned as the new creature adopted into the family of God and seeking to serve him and to grow into his likeness, by being conformed to the likeness of his dear Son. Therefore, in all such expressions as we find in our text and its context, the Apostle refers exclusively to the new creature, and ignores entirely, as dead, the mortal body. It is from this standpoint that we can say of the new creature that he is holy; that the righteousness of the law is fulfilled in him, and that the wicked one toucheth him not.—Rom. 8:4; 1 John 5:18.

Those things which he formerly did he is to do no more. The Apostle says, moreover, that he would not be content merely to be dead in the flesh—in the sense of simply abstaining from sin—but that he should seek to become energetic in the service of righteousness. If we ask how this is to be done, the answer is, "by the Spirit of God." If the Spirit of God was powerful enough to raise our Lord Jesus from the dead, it will quicken, or energize, our mortal bodies. When our bodies have been reckoned as alive, quickened, they are energized in opposition to sin and in harmony with righteousness. This, then, is the Apostle's thought in our text.

It is well that we should have in mind the thought that the consecration of our bodies to the Lord may permit us to do more in his service than we could have done if we had not been begotten of the holy Spirit. We are not to expect that this energizing will work a miracle, such as the restoration of a person in the last stage of consumption, etc. The Lord does not work in this way. But the Lord's people would do well to cultivate the thought that if it be the Lord's will they shall be able to do something in his service. If we have this confidence, every one of us can do much more than if we do not have it, for it gives new energy of mind and body.

A great deal of harm is done in the world by people who not only have a wrong opinion themselves, but who spread contagion of thoughts to others. We see to what a large extent this is carried on by Christian Scientists, who deny that there is either pain or death.

While we do not advocate this course, yet we should not, on the other hand, imagine that our bodies are in worse condition than they really are, but in a wise and judicious manner should seek to use them in the Lord's service. Instead of discouraging others we would do well to encourage them to realize that it is largely according to their faith that they shall be able to do anything. If we have no strong desire to accomplish something we shall become weak, sickly.

ILLUSTRATION OF THE POWER OF MIND OVER BODY

To some extent the world recognizes the power of the mind over the body. An account in the newspapers recently told of two great, strong men who were sick in bed as the result of the coddling of their mother, who should have encouraged them to get up and take a little air and exercise. Another case reported was that of a woman who imagined that she was glass. At first she used to get up while the attendant put the room in order; but later she would not sit up. After she had been in bed for a year or two, the doctor told her that there was nothing the matter with her body, but with her mind. One day her relatives got her up in the middle of the room and left her there, telling her that there was nothing wrong except her attitude of mind. At first she declared that she would go to pieces. She did not, however. With proper encouragement she lost her fear of breaking and began to improve; in due time she was quite well.

You have heard of the professor upon whom some college boys played a trick. They planned to meet the professor on his way to school and to test the power of the mind over the body. The first boy met him, as they had agreed, when he was going out of his house, and told him that he was not looking well. He replied, "I am feeling quite well." Another met him a block away, then another a little further on, telling him that he looked pale and sick. Yet another met him and said, "You are a sick man." Still another greeted him with, "Professor A, you should be in bed." The next one

exclaimed, "I must help you home, for you are in no condition to be at school!" The professor went home sick. All this occurred within fifteen minutes. The story is said to be true.

All through life we are either helping or hindering others. Tell people something good; seek to cheer them, and when yourself ailing, follow the good suggestions you make to others. If you have a headache, moaning will not mend matters. Do not think so much about it; and by forgetting it, help nature to get rid of it. Nobody knows just how the power of the mind over the body is effected. The claim is that certain attitudes of mind favor certain microbes in the body. Medical journals state that children have died in spasms after having been suckled by mothers who have gotten into a rage a short time before nursing the children. It is well for all to have meek and quiet spirits, for faith, love, hope and kindness make for health.

It is very reasonable and logical that the Lord should have given us the most wonderful power in our minds to make people feel better, to control muscle and nerve. One's conduct in the sick room has an influence upon the patient. One should speak kindly and cheerfully. If nothing that will be helpful can be said truthfully, it is far better to be quiet or to remain outside of the sick room.

A sister supposed to be dying once sent for us. Upon entering the room we said, "Well, Sister, you are looking better than we had expected to see you. You are better!" "I am feeling better," she answered. "When did you begin to feel better?" we inquired. "When I heard you in the hall," she said. She is living today and married, and has a child. Yet we might have helped her to die, and might have had a funeral service instead of a marriage ceremony.

It is well for us to consider the question: If the natural mind has such an effect upon the body, how should it be with those who can claim, "We have the mind of Christ"? What effect should this mind, or disposition, which is loving, generous, kind, forgiving toward our fellows, and reverential, loyal and obedient toward God, have upon the body? Does not the Apostle declare that if the spirit, or mind, of God dwell in them their mortal bodies shall be quickened?

He does; but do not misunderstand the Apostle's teaching. In the preceding verse (Rom. 8:10) he states, "If Christ be in you the body is dead"—not literally dead, but reckonedly dead, in that the human will has died and that the will of God in Christ has been accepted instead. The will is dead to sinful things; it does not love nor practise them as once it did. His argument is that such a deadness to sin, although desirable, should not stop at that point; we should by God's grace seek to get alive to righteousness and to be as active in its service as once we were alive to sin and active in its service. He proceeds to show that this, although a great change, is possible to us; and he tells us how it is to be accomplished.

He says that the mighty Spirit of God, which could and did raise our Lord from literal death, is able to quicken (make alive) to the service of righteousness these very bodies once alive to sin, but now, by God's grace, mortified, killed, "dead to sin." He therefore urges all who have the spirit, or mind of Christ, not only to be dead to sin, but to permit the Spirit of Christ in them to make them alive to holiness and to God's service in general. He shows them further that the new mind of Christ which they have received is a spirit of adoption into God's family as sons, and that if they are sons they are not only "free," but must bear fruit unto holiness, and that their joint-heirship with Christ as sons depends upon this quickening of their mortal bodies—"if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together."—Rom. 8:17.

All who catch the real sense of this passage will see that it has no reference to physical quickening and immunity from pain and sickness, but to a quickening, or energizing by the Lord's Spirit so as to be, not only willing, but glad, to "suffer with him." Hence those who see their high calling should not expect exemption from sufferings and trials and difficulties; and the usual aches and pains which come to the Lord's people, as well as to the world; in a natural way, should be treated as the world treats them, but borne with greater patience and cheerfulness.

St. Paul clearly marks the distinction between our new mind, which, consecrated in Christ, is accepted as the new creature, holy and acceptable to God, and our mortal body, which he calls "this dead body"—originally dead, under divine sentence, because of sin, but redeemed by the precious blood of Christ, and justified, and then included in our sacrifice when we gave our little all in consecration to the Lord, as a living sacrifice, to be dead with Christ, to suffer with him even unto death. He declares that those who are walking after the Spirit, seeking to serve the Lord in Spirit and in truth, from the heart, are freed from condemnation, and that they do not now walk after the flesh, wishing to fulfil its desires.—Rom. 8:1, 4.

And here we are to distinguish closely between walking after the Spirit and walking up to the Spirit. We should, of course, follow as closely as possible to the spirit of truth and righteousness, and yet we cannot hope to walk up to the spirit of the divine requirements so long as we are in the imperfect flesh, though we may strive in this direction continually. One thing is positive, however—we must not walk after the flesh. To do so would imply that we had lost the new mind, the new disposition, the new will; that we had become dead to those hopes which had led to our consecration.

The Apostle urges that all remember that one who is "in the flesh," who lives in harmony with the sinful propensities of his fallen, fleshly nature, is not pleasing to God; and that such yielding to the flesh, of course, if persisted in, will end in death. He proceeds to reason that if the spirit, or mind, or disposition of God (the spirit of holiness) dwells in one, he cannot be in sympathetic accord with the fallen human nature, its appetites and ambitions. If any man have not the Spirit of Christ he is not of the body of Christ. Christ's Spirit is not a Spirit of harmony with sin, but of opposition to sin; He laid down his life to vanquish sin and to deliver mankind from its power and dominion. Therefore, whoever claims to have the Spirit of Christ, but who loves and wilfully practises sin, and with his mind serves sin, deceives himself; for he has neither part nor lot in Christ.

St. Paul proceeds further along this same line, arguing that our adoption into God's family, our begetting to newness of heart and mind, and our acceptance thus as members of the body of Christ, while it means, first of all, that the body is ignored and reckoned as dead because of sin and that only our spirits, or minds, are reckoned as righteous and alive—the beginning of our eternal existence—nevertheless, this good condition is not to be considered the limit of our ambition and attainment in Christ-likeness.

On the contrary, we are to remember that the Spirit of God is powerful; that in the case of our Lord Jesus it was powerful enough to raise him from the dead. And as we become more imbued with and controlled by the holy Spirit of God in our hearts, in our minds, divine power will come to us gradually through this channel of the holy Spirit, which will permit a figurative raising of our mortal bodies from their death-state into activities of spiritual life in the service of the Lord, for the assurance given us through the Apostle is that if God's Spirit dwells in us in sufficient measure—abundantly—He will energize our mortal bodies—not our immortal, resurrection bodies.

It is our hope that in due time the Lord by his Spirit will give us new bodies in the resurrection; and that those bodies will be immortal, perfect in every respect; and that then, not only our minds, but our bodies also will be in fullest harmony with God and his every law and work of righteousness. That condition will be glorious; it is already a glorious prospect. But the Apostle holds before us that even our present, mortal bodies, sentenced, then justified, reckoned dead because of sin and consecrated, may be so quickened or energized that, instead of being any longer servants of sin, or even merely dead to it, they may, under the careful watchfulness of the new mind, be used as servants of righteousness, of truth.

This means, of course, a High Christian development, a large attainment toward "the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ." The measure of the fulness of Christ, the maturity and growth necessary to its attainment, involves the "putting on of the Lord Jesus Christ," and is not the work of a moment, nor of an hour, nor of a month, nor of a year. It is the work of a life time. But unless it is begun, it will never be completed. And, indeed, we may be sure that we can never fully put on Christ's characteristics. However, this is the standard for which every one of the Lord's people must continually strive.

The Lord will see our endeavor, our strenuous fighting to put off the old nature, to put off "the works of the flesh" and to be clothed with the garments of righteousness suitable to our relationship to him, and our success will be proportionate to our attainment of the mind, or disposition of Christ—holy conformity to the will of the Father in all things. How comforting in this connection is the promise of our Lord, that our "Heavenly Father is more willing to give his holy Spirit (the spirit of holiness, the spirit of wisdom) to them that ask him than are earthly parents to give good gifts unto their children!"—Luke 11:13.

SINS NEVER TO BE FORGIVEN

MARK 3:20-35.—JULY 7.

TEXT:—*"This is the condemnation, that light is come into the world and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil."*—John 3:19.

John the Baptist declared of Jesus, "He must increase, but I must decrease"; and so it was. After John was put into prison Jesus' ministry became more and more public, especially through the numerous works performed by him. The multitudes followed the Great Teacher, and his friends became solicitous for him, for even they feared and said, "He is beside himself"—so quickly had his course changed from one of privacy to one of publicity.

The scribes and Pharisees considered themselves the representatives of the Jewish orthodoxy and qualified to pass upon everything theological; and indeed the public waited for their message, saying, "Have any of the scribes and Pharisees believed on him?" Hence Jesus declared that these representatives of divine things were doubly responsible, for they would neither enter into discipleship themselves, to be members of the kingdom which Jesus preached, nor would they permit the public to become his followers if they could help it.

Jesus was at the time in Galilee, in the vicinity of Capernaum. Certain of the scribes who had come down from Jerusalem felt it their duty to warn the public against becoming too interested in this Man and his teachings, and thus ignoring the long-established theories for which they and the Pharisees stood.

That Jesus did many miracles they could not dispute, and that he specially and on many occasions cast out demons they could not deny. They explained this, however, by saying that Jesus had collusion with Beelzebub (Satan), and that by the power of that prince of darkness he was able to cast out demons. But Jesus answered that if it was true that Satan had turned reformer and was breaking down his own power and opposing his own minions, the demons, then it proved that his kingdom would soon fall entirely.

The fact that today many religious systems practice one kind or another of faith-healing is claimed to be a mark of divine approval, on the strength of our Lord's words. Yet we have, in opposition to this, to remember that those who claim to exercise this power very generally deny the very existence of the Gospel of Christ. Some of them deny that man is a sinner at all, and declare that there is no such thing as sin. Practically all of them deny the redemptive value of Christ's death. Practically all of them deny that he will come again and establish his kingdom and through it bring to mankind the promised blessings of restitution to human perfection and to all that was lost in Eden and redeemed at Calvary.—Acts 3:19-21.

There is only one answer to make to the claim that these faith-healings prove the truth of these various antagonistic doctrines, and that answer is the one which Jesus here states. If their faith-healing power be not of God it must be of the adversary; and if it be of the adversary, it proves that he is upholding false and contradictory doctrines, and that his house or dominion is more or less divided and in straits; and this implies that the collapse of the dominion of this prince of darkness is nigh. This view is more and more impressing itself upon Bible students.

BLASPHEMING THE HOLY SPIRIT

Addressing the Pharisees, who charged him with being Satan's prime minister and agent, Jesus declared that all manner of sin and blasphemy which men commit are forgivable, except one kind, and this kind can never be forgiven—it is blasphemy against the holy Spirit. The Savior did not mean that the Scribes had said something against the holy Spirit of God in an abstract way, but apparently they had perceived that our Lord's teachings were pure, holy, helpful, elevating to his hearers, honoring to God, and that he spake as never man spake; but after all these evidences of Jesus' holiness and relationship to God they called him a relative and representative of Satan.

Jesus did not say that the scribes and Pharisees had committed the sin of blasphemy against the holy Spirit. Some of them may have done so, and others of them may have been partially in ignorance of what they did; and the sin against the holy Spirit could not be committed in ignorance. It would be a wilful attributing of holy things to an unholy power or source. Jesus did not judge or condemn the scribes, for he declared that he had not come to judge the world, to condemn it, but quite to the contrary, to die for it, to redeem it, to purchase it at the cost of his life.

Our Lord did, however, give the warning reproof that those who could thus see the righteousness of his teachings, and how he glorified God in his words and actions, and who could then impute all of this to Satan, must be to a considerable extent perverse in their hearts, and if so, they would be in great danger of eternal condemnation, the sentence of the second death; they would be like "natural brute beasts," made to be taken and destroyed. (2 Pet. 2:12; Acts 3:23) Jesus made this statement because they said that the spirit that was in him was an unclean spirit—that he was actuated by one of the fallen angels and not by the divine Spirit.

"HATH NEVER FORGIVENESS"

The Bible teaches that the penalty of Adam's sin was death—cutting off from life—but that under divine providence the work of Jesus is to release all mankind from that death sentence, and give to all an opportunity of returning to harmony with God by bringing all to a clearer knowledge of the truth. To some this knowledge comes now, with the privilege of becoming members of the bride class, joint-heirs with Jesus. To such as accept this privilege and receive the begetting of the holy Spirit, the test of life or death everlasting begins.

But with the world this is not the time of testing respecting life or death everlasting. For them the next age, the period of Messiah's kingdom, will be the testing time, and their privilege will be to attain human perfection, otherwise to be cut off in the second death. Meantime, whatever light they may be enjoying will be either helpful or injurious, as they shall deal with it. If they allow it to have an uplifting influence in their lives they will be that much more advantaged when they shall come under the kingdom influences and tests; they will not need to have so many stripes.

On the contrary, those who violate their consciences and ignore the light which they enjoy and sin against it, will find themselves proportionately degraded when they shall come under the kingdom influences and tests. The scribes of this lesson had so misused their education and opportunities as to be in great danger of becoming so degraded that even the kingdom influences would not bring them to a condition worthy of everlasting life.

BROTHERS, SISTERS AND MOTHER

Today's study closes with the Master's explanation of the class to which he acknowledged relationship. The multitudes who flocked to his miracles, and to hear him speak as never man spake, were chiefly the poor and the publicans and sinners, and such as were not great nor very religious according to the standards of their time. Their degradation, their realization that they were sinners, made the Master's "wonderful words of life" especially attractive to them. No one else offered them hope. All others declared that God would not notice them. The religionists of that day reproved Jesus because of his recognition of the lower classes, but none were so low, so degraded, that he would not lend them his helping hand if they had a disposition to return to the Father's house. He was indeed the Friend of all willing to come to the Father by him.

An opportunity of showing the multitudes the basis for his sympathy came when Jesus' mother and brethren on the outside of the throng sent him word that they desired to see him. How beautiful the lesson of the Great Teacher's breadth of spirit, regardless of caste and class, when he said, "Who is my mother and my brethren?" And then, looking toward his disciples who were sitting near him and taking in his teachings, he said, "Behold, my mother and my brethren! for whosoever will do the will of God, the same is my brother and my sister and my mother."—Matt. 12:46-50.

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REPROVE WORKS OF DARKNESS

EPHESIANS 5:11-21.—JUNE 30.

TEXT:—*"Wine is a mocker, strong drink is raging."*—Prov. 20:1.

Light and darkness are used as figures and as synonyms for truth and untruth, righteousness and sin. Thus, "God is Light and in him is no darkness at all." Thus also Jesus said, "I am the Light of the world." Thus also he said of his followers when he was leaving them, "Ye are the light of the world"; "Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works and glorify your Father which is in heaven."

On the contrary, Satan is styled the "prince of darkness"; and his rule of unrighteousness is styled "the kingdom of darkness"; and those subject to his influence are styled "the children of darkness." Evil works contrary to the Lord and righteousness are styled "works of darkness."

When our first parents sinned they forfeited fellowship with God, and because of disobedience became children of the adversary; and Jesus said to such in his day, "Ye are of your father, the devil, because his works ye do." (John 8:44) Thus our entire race came under the influence of the darkness of sin. A night of sin, sorrow and death has followed for now six thousand years. We have the promise of a glorious morning when Messiah shall reign, when "Satan shall be bound for a thousand years," and when "the Sun of Righteousness shall arise with healing in his beams."

But this morning has not yet come; we have it merely by faith, by hope. God's promises respecting that glorious morning are figuratively called "light," and these constitute the Bible. So the Scriptures, after telling us that darkness covers the earth and gross darkness the heathen, tell us also that the Bible is a light to the path of God's people in the midst of this darkness. "Thy Word is a lamp to my feet and a lantern to my footsteps." (Psa. 119:105) St. Peter said, "We have a more sure Word of prophecy, to which we do well that we take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place until the day dawn."—2 Pet. 1:19.

LIGHT REPROVES DARKNESS

In the present time, therefore, the masses of the world—deluded, enslaved and intoxicated by ignorance, superstition and the wiles of the adversary—are generally sympathetic with the darkness wherein they are. They were born in it and are so accustomed to it that if brought immediately into the presence of the light they would be in distress. There are not many light-bearers in the world anyway. True, the census reports four hundred millions of Christians, but alas! the vast majority give no sign of ever having seen the true light, and many of those who did receive the light put it under a bushel, until it was extinguished.

Surely it is as true today as it was in Jesus' day that a very small number of humanity, comparatively, have the true light of the Gospel of God, the holy Spirit illuminating their minds and hearts, and who set this light upon a candlestick that it might give light in the midst of darkness.

But although these are few in number, they are very precious to the Lord. He calls them his saints, his jewels, and tells us that at his second coming, prior to the setting up of his kingdom to rule the world, these, as his jewel class, shall be gathered to himself beyond the veil—changed by the power of the first resurrection from human to the divine nature. These he tells us he will gather as his true "wheat," in the harvest of this age, into his heavenly garner—"changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye"; "Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father."—Matt. 13:43.

It is this latter class that the Apostle addresses in this lesson—the same class which the Savior addressed saying, "Fear not, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." (Luke 12:32) When the Father shall give these the kingdom, as joint-heirs with their Redeemer, everything will be changed. The prince of darkness will be bound for a thousand years. The Prince of Light will shine forth to scatter all the darkness and miasma of sin, sorrow, ignorance and superstition.

THE LIGHT-BEARERS' RESPONSIBILITY

In today's lesson the Apostle is explaining the responsibility of these light-bearers. They represent God in this dark, benighted world; they represent the justice, wisdom, love and power of God. They are not able to let all of this glorious light so shine before men as to scatter the gross darkness of the present time, but they can do much to glorify their Father and can measurably scatter the thick darkness and bring in a sort of twilight at least to some. Obligation to do this is laid upon all of them.

These are not expected to convert the world, but merely to find a sufficient number of similar characters to themselves to complete the foreordained membership in the church, the bride class, the joint-heirs. Faithfulness and zeal in this service will determine whether or not they will be worthy of having a place in the bride class, and, if worthy, how high a station of honor they may occupy. Let us give heed gladly to the divine Word respecting our obligation.

We must "have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them." How searching, how positive—absolutely no fellowship with them! More than this, we must not be content with a negative opposition, but must reprove them. However wisely we may seek to fulfil these requirements, they are sure to bring to us the enmity, the disfavor and the disappointment of many whom we love, and whose gool opinion we strongly desire. But as good soldiers of the Lord Jesus Christ we must be loyal, we must be faithful. He that is ashamed of the Master and his Word and the principles of righteousness for which he stands, of him will the Savior be ashamed when he comes to establish his kingdom, when he comes to reckon with his servants.

Evidently the Apostle does not mean that we shall undertake to reprove everything that is out of accord with our high ideals of the divine law and the divine will, because he here mentions the things to be reproved, saying, "It is a shame even to speak of those things which are done of them in secret"—uncleanness, impure practices, the Apostle evidently had in mind. We must manifest our disapproval when we are in close contact with such things.

This does not mean that we shall leave the preaching of the Gospel to go "slumming," to do "muck-raking." It may not mean that we shall even publicly denounce the evil, but it surely does mean that our lives shall be so contrary to all sinful and impure practices that all may take knowledge that we have been with Jesus, and have learned of him. This is evidently the Apostle's thought in verse 13. It is not necessary for us to suppose that the world is in full sympathy with all the darkness and sin prevalent. On the contrary, as the Apostle suggests (verse 14), some are asleep and do not, therefore, realize the distinction between light and darkness. Some of these, if thoroughly awake, might be glad to know of Christ and the true light.

WALK YE CIRCUMSPECTLY

In view of these things, said the Apostle, the followers of Jesus should be careful, circumspect in the walk of life, not foolish, but wise, not squanderers of time, but redeeming the time, purchasing it back from worldly cares and pleasures, to have the more to use in the Master's service, realizing that the days are evil and that all our energies are needful if we would "fight a good fight" for the light as against the darkness of sin. To do this will require that we study and understand the will of the Lord.

If others are drunk with excessive use of wine, let us be filled with a different kind of wine—with the holy Spirit. If others seek to find joy and solace in intoxicants, let us find ours in being filled with the mind of Christ. This spiritual refreshment will lead us to psalms and hymns, and to make merry in our hearts to the Lord, and to be thankful for God's favor in Christ.

THE MYSTERY OF THE KINGDOM

MARK 4:1-20.—JULY 14.

TEXT:—*"Receive with meekness the engrafted Word, which is able to save your souls."*—James 1:21.

The salvation open at the present time has been obtainable only through faith, and faith is dependent upon a measure of knowledge, or revelation, and this knowledge, or revelation, came to us from God, for said St. Peter, "Holy men of old spoke and wrote as they were moved by the holy Spirit." God in this age is calling a class possessed of ears of appreciation for his message. These are mainly the weary and heavy laden and sin-sick, chiefly the poor of this world, rich in faith.

It is not enough that they hear the message, not enough that additionally they accept it, turn from sin and consecrate their lives to God and his service and be accepted of him, through the merit of Jesus, and be begotten of the holy Spirit. From that moment they may be said to be saved

and to have everlasting life, if they follow a certain course. That course includes a continual study of the divine instructions and promises and the exercise of faith and prayer, and obedience and trust, even unto the end.

The point of this lesson is to show the importance of having the right kind of spiritual food, and of using it and not allowing the new nature to become choked by earthly hopes, aims or ambitions. Such as thus overcome will be inheritors with Jesus of his glorious Messianic kingdom of a thousand years, which is to bless Israel and, through Israel, all the families of the earth.

Jesus gave the parable of the Sower of the "good seed," some of which fell by the wayside, and was devoured by the fowls; some fell on rocky ground where it had no depth of earth, and brought forth no fruitage; some amongst thorns, which choked it; some into the good ground, which yielded thirty fold, sixty fold and one hundred fold. The disciples were perplexed and unable to understand it and inquired of the Great Teacher its meaning.

His answer was that he was quite willing that they should understand the parable, and that it related to the kingdom of God, but it was not to be understood by outsiders. He explained that it was for this reason that He always spoke in parables, so that the general public might see and hear and not understand, because the masses even of the Jews were not in a heart condition to understand and be profited by these lessons respecting the kingdom. Only such persons as desired to become members of the kingdom class and were willing to undertake the stringent conditions of the "narrow way"—only such were to fully and clearly understand the parables of the kingdom. This is in harmony with all of God's dealings in the present time. We read again, "None of the wicked shall understand, but the wise (toward God) shall understand." And again we read, "The secret of the Lord is with them that reverence him, and he will show them his covenant."

In Verse 13 the Master indicates that this parable would serve as a general key to his followers for their interpretation of all his parables. "Seed" does not mean literal seed, "birds" do not mean birds, "thorns" do not mean thorns, etc. Proceeding, the Great Teacher expounded the parable as follows: (1) The seed that was sown represents the Word of God. More than this, it represents that particular element or feature of God's Word which relates to the kingdom.

This is shown by St. Matthew's account of the same parable (Matt. 13:19): "When anyone heareth the Word (message of the kingdom), and understandeth it not, then cometh the wicked one and catcheth away that which was sown in his heart. This is he that receiveth the seed by the wayside." Our lesson says that the wicked one meant is Satan. Satan and his evil agents are therefore represented in the parable by "birds," and the lesson is that however much of the Gospel of the kingdom we may read or hear preached, we lose the benefit of that which we do not understand.

Evidently, then, much of the Bible study and much of the religious reading is lost, because not understood. The secondary lesson is that one reason why the "good seed" does not enter into the understanding is that the heart is not in a receptive attitude. Like the wayside path, it is hard. Such hard hearts, selfish hearts, proud hearts, are of the kind which the Savior does not wish to have understand his parables nor understand the glorious kingdom plan which they expound.

(2) The seed sown in the stony place represents those who, when they hear the message of the kingdom, are delighted. They say, How good that sounds! What a grand time there will be when Messiah rules in righteousness to bless the world and lift up the poor, degraded members of Adam's family! And how great is the privilege of becoming members of the bride of Christ, to be associated with him in his glorious kingdom work! But the class represented by the stony ground have little depth of character; they are merely emotional.

The "seed," or message of the kingdom, which these heard with such delight at first, never matures in their hearts, because they are too shallow, too superficial in their love of righteousness. Below the surface those are hard hearts and selfish, and so, when they find that the good seed of the kingdom is unpopular and that it will bring them a certain amount of reproach and contempt and perhaps persecution—then all their ardor oozes out, their zeal is at an end. The kingdom message fails to produce in them the fruitage desired. The trouble was not with the seed nor with the sower, nor with the sun of persecution necessary for the ripening—the fault lay in the fact that their hearts were not right; they were hard, stony.

(3) The seed sown in the thorny ground represents those who have good hearts and have heard the message of the kingdom and appreciate it and rejoice in it, but their hearts are divided. They allow the cares of this life and the love of riches to have such a share of their heart's affections that the kingdom message does not have the opportunity to bring forth such fruitage as will be pleasing to the Lord.

Let us note carefully that these thorns do not, as some suggest, represent gambling devices, card parties, saloons and other places of ill-repute, nor secret sins and vices. None of those things should appeal to Christians at all. The Master distinctly tells us that the thorns represent "the cares of this life and the deceitfulness of riches." Thus every Christian man or woman who has received the message of the kingdom and has allowed the cares of this life and the deceitfulness of riches to choke and frustrate his prospects as respects the kingdom is represented in this parable. Very nice people, hospitable, educated, etc., belong to this class of the parable represented by the thorny ground.

(4) According to the parable there will be three classes of believers who will attain the kingdom—or we may say, they will all be one class in the sense that they will bring forth the one kind of fruitage and be acceptable to the Lord as joint-heirs in his kingdom, but the differences between them will be in the amount of fruitage such yield—some thirty fold, some sixty fold and some a hundred fold.

The Lord does not explain the differences between these fruitages, but we may well understand that the amount of fruitage will be measured by the amount of love and zeal in the heart. The fully appreciative and the fully loving will be the most energetic to know and to do the Master's will, and they will bring forth the largest fruitage—a hundred fold—and they, too, will have the chief places in the kingdom.

St. Paul declares that as star differs from star in glory, so it will be with those who attain unto the first resurrection—all will come forth glorious, but some will blaze with a more resplendent brilliancy, because of their great zeal, and therefore their great likeness to their Redeemer and Lord. Jesus likewise mentions the distinctions amongst those who will sit with him in his throne, he assured James and John that, if they were willing to drink of his cup and be baptized into his death, they should surely sit with him in his throne; but as to whether or not they would have the chief places of honor and distinction was not for him to say. Those places will be given according to the Father's determination; that is to say, according to principles of justice.

Those will have the places of honor next to the Redeemer, who, in this life, will manifest to God the greatest harmony with his character, in their zeal, their love for God, the truth and the brethren.

We are not to understand that those people represented by the thorny ground and the wayside will suffer eternal torments because of their unfaithfulness in respect to the kingdom, nor are we to understand that others, who do not hear about the kingdom in the present life at all, will on this account suffer eternal torment. They will all, however, lose the grand privilege and glorious blessing of participating in the kingdom, whatever they may obtain under the restitution blessings which that kingdom will inaugurate for the blessing of mankind in general.

SCRIPTURE MEMORY CARDS

Brother L. W. Jones, M. D., when studying medicine found great help from the use of memory-cards. Applying the principle to the study of God's Word, he has gotten out Scripture memory-cards. On the one side of the card is printed a text of Scripture. On the other side is the reference. Different colors of card classify different Bible topics. The pack consists of fifty cards. They can be used individually or in a company. The text can be cited and the quotation called for; or, the quotation can be read and the citation called for. Thus the most prominent texts of the Scriptures can be memorized and, at the same time, the memory will be generally strengthened along these lines. It is particularly convenient to have the desired Scripture at your tongue's end.

Brother Jones sold a considerable number of these sets, but now has turned over to the Society his entire stock. The fifty cards, neatly boxed, postpaid, sell for twenty-five cents. There are two series of them. Some who have learned the first series desire more and the second series was prepared for them.

These cards in good quantity are now in stock and subject to your order. Have a look at them at the convention book stall, where your orders can be placed, if you desire.

BROTHER RUSSELL'S EPISTLE TO PILGRIMS

In April the letter below was sent to the pilgrim brethren. Now we publish it for the benefit of all our readers, at the suggestion of some of the pilgrims. One of these expresses his reasons for suggesting the publication of the letter, as follows:—

BELOVED BROTHER RUSSELL:—The sweet, holy Spirit of the Master's love and the tender care for the sacred interests of the Lord's flock shines out so beautifully in your letter to the pilgrim brethren that my heart responds in the same spirit to assure you that every item of your counsel is carefully noted.

The spirit of your letter is so overflowing with the love of the Master that it would seem to me that its publication in THE WATCH TOWER would serve the cause most effectively.

(1) It would help all the friends of the truth to see the beautiful relationship that exists between yourself and the pilgrim brethren and give a true expression of the animus prompting the service. Some of the friends quite overlook this and fail completely to grasp the loving relationship between yourself and the brethren in the field.

(2) It would enable all the friends to see that the pilgrims are faithfully following the instructions of the Office when they call attention to the colporteur service, the privileges of the extension work, the blessing of the family Manna at breakfast, and the interests of family worship. The endeavor thus to look after the interests of the dear "flock" is not a desire to make a record, or to show a spirit of officiousness, but is the humble love of the Master for his true "sheep," manifested unobtrusively in those who in his providence he entrusts with this service.

TO THE PILGRIM BRETHREN OF THE I. B. S. A.:—

Greetings in the name of our Lord and Redeemer! I often wish that I could meet you personally and say a few words and hear from you. I will take this opportunity of giving you my little message inaudibly and without the expense of a regular journey. I want to refresh your memories respecting some things which I have already said, but which, it appears, will slip from the memories of some of your number. My experience in the work and knowledge of conditions are the basis for the following counsels:

(1) Avoid as much as possible all unkind references to Christian ministers or others who differ from us in Bible interpretation. Preach the Gospel! Let its mighty power do the work. In referring to others, speak as sympathetically as possible, endeavoring to make apologies and allowances rather than to condemn, which is not our province. Avoid so far as possible all discussion of the immortality of the soul, the Trinity and our Lord's presence. The time may yet come for wrangling over these things, but we believe it has not yet arrived. Take your cue, please, from the DAWNS, TOWERS and sermons, and be sure to make your statements less rather than more pungent and specific. The people are prejudiced along these lines. Experience shows that they can be much better reached otherwise, and after they come to understand other matters of the truth—when these matters so difficult for them become easy.

(2) By precept, as well as by example, you can help all the dear friends along the lines mentioned and help the cause much. The truth has suffered more from the unwisdom of its friends than from anything its enemies have said.

(3) Continue to give my love to all the dear classes and individuals in the truth as you meet them. I love to think of you all as in a measure representatives of myself as well as of the Lord, and I believe that the friends get most good from the Pilgrim visits when they view them from this standpoint. Usually, except on Sundays, you will have plenty of time aside from the meetings to look after the lame, halt, blind and sick of the "sheep"—to carry them crumbs of comfort, to help bind up their wounds, or to encourage them in the good way. I trust that this opportunity for service is not neglected. It is one of the most important. Sometimes a dear "sheep" will become entangled and cease to attend the meetings. It is a part of your shepherding work to look after just such cases—to hunt them up and to help them back to fellowship if possible, or, failing in this, to encourage them to be loyal to the Lord whatever their outward conditions.

(4) As representatives of the Society, the friends will naturally inquire of you respecting the colporteur work, the volunteer work, etc., or, if they fail to ask and you see no activity along these lines, it would be your duty and privilege to bring up the question and inquire to what extent the service of the Lord is going forward. Make inquiries about classes where they have a surplus of talent and encourage the class extension work. Keep in memory that you are not speaking for yourself merely nor especially, but that you are the Society's representative and, above all, along this line in our present work, the Lord's representative. Be careful, therefore, that your counsels shall be encouraging and helpful, being not carelessly given.

(5) As you go to the various homes please give the dear friends to understand that I have requested you to notice whether or not the HEAVENLY MANNA is used at breakfast, dinner, supper, or some time, and whether or not an opportunity is sought to have the family worship or giving of thanks at the table. Assure them that our interest is not prompted by any other motive than that of their good. So sure do we feel that prayer and consideration of spiritual things is essential to spiritual growth that we fear that all the dear friends who allow business, pleasure, or anything to come between themselves and the Lord are separating themselves from the spirit of divine fellowship which the Lord encourages. Remind them also at a convenient time of the great blessing that is being experienced by some in connection with the continuous reading of the Six Volumes of SCRIPTURE STUDIES every year—ten to twelve pages a day. We are leaky vessels, and the truth gradually ebbs away unless we replenish.

(6) It is our supposition that all who are deeply interested in the present truth and who see it from the viewpoint in THE WATCH TOWER are interested in the weekly sermons. We assume that they would be interested for their own sakes and interested additionally for the sake of millions of others who are being thus reached. All such will desire to have regularly some paper publishing the sermons. Generally we can supply them cheaper than they could otherwise obtain them.

But another matter should be borne in mind, namely, that their subscriptions should go to such paper or papers as need some encouragement—even though it should cost more—even though in some respects it should not be as pleasing to them as another. As it is, two or three papers have immense lists of our readers—far more than their share—while other papers get comparatively small encouragement and are always in danger of becoming discouraged and dropping the service. The best general rule for friends to follow is to send subscriptions to THE WATCH TOWER Office and to take the paper published nearest to their home, which carries the one or the three-column service—whichever they prefer. We make special mention of this because some of the dear friends have been unintentionally working at cross purposes in this matter, seeming not to recognize the wiser course.

This year we are planning for three general conventions, and I hope that we can arrange that each of you shall have a chance to attend one of them. I am expecting to be at all, and therefore hope to see all of you. The location for the first of these will be near Warrensburg, Mo. (Chautauqua), June 1-8; the second at Toronto, Can., June 30-July 7, and the third at Washington, D. C., July 6-14. The object in having the three conventions this year is to accommodate those who cannot travel so far as is necessary when there is only one convention. We shall expect about fifteen hundred at each of these conventions—perhaps two thousand.

With much Christian love, your brother and servant in the Lord, C. T. RUSSELL.

IT IS NOT THE DEED WE DO

"It is not the deed we do,
Though the deed be ever so fair,
But the love that the dear Lord looketh for,
Hidden with holy care
In the heart of the deed so fair.

"The love is the priceless thing,
The treasure our treasure must hold;
Or ever the Lord will take the gift,
Or tell the worth of the gold
By the love that cannot be told."

SOME INTERESTING QUESTIONS

APPLIES TO THE BEGOTTEN ONES

Question.—To whom do the words in Heb. 6:4-6 apply—"It is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the holy Spirit, and have tasted the good Word of God, and the powers of the world [age] to come, if they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance"?

Answer.—The conditions mentioned in the passage above quoted are all more or less intertwined. That is to say, the one who has been made partaker of the heavenly gift of justification is sanctified, begotten of the holy Spirit; for only in that way can he get God's evidence respecting his justification. No one is justified by merely believing that Jesus lived or that Jesus died. In order to come to the point of justification and have the merit of Christ imputed, he must previously have presented his body a living sacrifice; and faith in the Lord Jesus must accompany this presentation.

Anyone having done all in his power—having turned from sin, having believed in Jesus as the Redeemer, and having presented his body a living sacrifice—must next receive the imputation of Jesus' merit to make up his shortcomings, to cover his blemishes, in order that the Heavenly Father may be able to accept the sacrifice; for no imperfect thing can come upon the altar of the Lord. It requires the merit of Christ to make good what is lacking in the one who presents himself in sacrifice; and only those who thus believe and present their bodies in sacrifice are the recipients of Christ's merit by imputation; and only such are begotten of the holy Spirit. God's arrangement is that no one can be justified unless he has made a full consecration, after having already turned from sin. Christ would not impute his merit to any except such as make this full consecration; and the Father would not accept by begetting with the holy Spirit any others than those who have done so.

Those who have received justification have at the same time received the begetting of the holy Spirit, which is "the power of the age to come." The falling away of such, the Apostle says, would mean that they could never be renewed again. Why? Because they have had their share of the blessing of Christ. Christ's death was to bring a blessing—and only one—to every member of Adam's race—one full blessing, a complete blessing, such a blessing as will enable every member of the race—if he will, when he understands it—to come fully and completely into harmony with God and thus to have eternal life. But after he has received his full blessing and then has rejected it, there is no hope in his case. He can never justify himself. He has had the merit of Christ and has repudiated it. There is no hope of renewing such a one, says the Apostle. The fate of such would not, of course, be eternal torment, but destruction—the second death.

THE DICTIONARY DEFINITION

Question.—Is there any difference between "death" and "annihilation"?

Answer.—The *Standard Dictionary*, our best authority on such matters, gives the following definition of annihilate: (1) *To put out of existence; destroy absolutely; reduce to nothing.* (2) *To destroy the identity of.* Its synonym is, *Exterminate, i. e., destroy entirely.* Words are only vehicles for conveying thought, and much depends upon the vehicle which best expresses your meaning in the question. The spark of animal energy which God supplied to Adam and which he, in turn, dispensed to his offspring, but which was forfeited for him and for his posterity by his act of disobedience, passes at death from the individual as absolutely as it does from a brute beast. The word "life," however, as used in a large number of instances, does not stand merely for the spark of animal energy, but is a synonym for soul or being.

In God's purpose or arrangement this being has not in death become extinct, exterminated, annihilated; for he has provided for it a future. There is, however, no sentient being in the sense of consciousness, or knowledge, or appreciation of pain or of joy, or any other experience. But the divine Creator, who first gave being, has declared that in the case of Adam and his children it is his purpose to provide a Redeemer, through whom all may be restored as completely as before they came under the death sentence.

The world, who do not recognize God or his power, and who have no knowledge of the promise of resurrection through the merit of Christ's redemptive work, might properly enough speak of one in death as being extinct, as a dead animal. This is the standpoint of the agnostic. But by believers, instructed of God respecting his purpose in Christ and in the resurrection of the dead eventually, and in the opportunity of eternal life to every one, this matter is to be viewed from the same standpoint from which our Lord viewed it when he said, "He is not a God of the dead, but of the living; for all live [or are alive] unto him" (Luke 20:38); or as the Apostle Paul stated when he spoke of "God, who quickeneth the dead, and calleth those things which be not as though they were" (Rom. 4:17); that is, God purposes their awakening, and speaks of the present condition of Adamic death as merely a suspension of life, and not as annihilation, extermination, extinction.

You probably have already in your library a little volume entitled THE DIVINE PLAN OF THE AGES—fourth million now on the press. This will give you a much fuller answer to your question than our limited space will allow in this column.

IS IT POSSIBLE FOR US TO LIVE WITHOUT SIN?

Question—When the Apostle wrote (1 John 2:1) "These things I write unto you that ye sin not," was it his thought that it is possible for us to live without sin?

Answer—In reading this text and many other Scriptures we need continually to keep in mind the fact that those who are accepted of God as his children, as members of the body of Christ, begotten of the holy Spirit, are all classed as new creatures and not as men. The new creature, therefore, in this text, would be the *ye*—"that *ye* sin not," as though the Apostle said, "The object of my writing is that you might realize the responsibility of abstaining from sin and continuing in God's love." Then he informs us how this is to be accomplished. In this as in other respects he shows that the new creature is responsible for the body. Anyone who would say that he was perfect and without flaw, would be deceiving himself. Nevertheless, these flaws are not of the new creature, but chargeable to the flesh. If the new creature should sin wilfully it would cease to be a new creature, because the new creature is begotten of the Spirit, has joined in the warfare against sin, and is facing in the very opposite direction of sin.

But if any man sin, let him not cast away his confidence in God, but let him remember that the Father, foreknowing that the new creature could not control every thought and work and act of the flesh, has made provision for these, and has provided for us an Advocate, Jesus Christ the Righteous. Our Lord has already become our Advocate. He has appeared on our behalf—appeared before the Father and made satisfaction for us.—Heb. 9:24.

Remembering this, if we find that through lack of faith, or weakness of the flesh, a step has been taken which is contrary to the Lord's will and our best spiritual interests, no time should be lost in retracing the step and calling upon the Lord. We have an altar consecrated with the precious blood of Christ, far superior in every way to that altar which Abraham consecrated with the blood of typical animals, and the Apostle exhorts us, "Let us, therefore, come boldly [courageously—full of faith] unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in every time of need."—Heb. 4:16.

APPLIES TO THOSE NOT SPIRIT-BEGOTTEN

Question—"Therefore the inhabitants of the earth are burned, and few men left." (Isa. 24:6.) Who are these few men? And how were the others burned?

Answer.—In the great burning day the "heavens" will be on fire, and "the earth and the works therein shall be burned up." This time of trouble will involve the whole world, practically everybody. The Lord speaks of some who will be preserved in the midst of this trouble. Just as the three Hebrews were preserved in the fiery furnace, so we expect that some will be spared in the time of trouble.

"Seek righteousness, seek meekness; it may be ye shall be hid in the day of the Lord's anger." (Zeph. 2:3.) This invitation seems to be to others than the spirit-begotten. It would not apply to the church, for her deliverance will be over before the culmination of the trouble. It would not apply to the "great company" class, for it is incidental to their deliverance that they shall suffer in this time of trouble the destruction of the flesh, and come up to honor out of "great tribulation." This, therefore, would seem to apply to a class of the world who are not spirit-begotten.

PREPARED FOR THE DEVIL AND HIS MESSENGERS

Question.—"For Tophet is ordained of old; yea, for the king it is prepared. He hath made it deep and large; the pile thereof is fire and much wood; the breath of the Lord, like a stream of brimstone, doth kindle it." (Isa. 30:33.) Who is the king for whom Tophet is prepared?

Answer.—Tophet was a name given to the Valley of Hinnom, which is symbolically a representation of the second

death, and the Lord is intimating that he has plenty of fire and fuel to accomplish all this destruction and that the Spirit of the Lord will set it afire and cause it to burn to the complete destruction. The king for whom it is prepared is the devil, with his messengers. He is the instigator of evil, whose destruction is already ordained. First, however, in the divine providence, before he shall be destroyed, the glorious reign of Messiah is arranged for, during which all of mankind shall be brought to a full knowledge of the truth, and to a full opportunity of coming into harmony with God, and of demonstrating whether they have the disposition of God or the disposition of the adversary, Satan. When the choice of each shall have been fully determined, the second death shall swallow up all for whom it has been prepared. Such as demonstrate their sympathy with evil will be counted as the messengers of Satan, and will have a share with him in the second death.

NOTHING SPECIFIC ABOUT URIM AND THUMMIM

Question.—Is there any revelation as to what the Urim and Thummim consisted of, or how the priests were answered?

Answer.—There is nothing specific known on this subject. In some manner or other, it is supposed, the breastplate that was worn by the High Priest was used as the Urim and Thummim—that is, to give definite answer, Yes or No, to the questions that were propounded. For instance, if the question were asked, Shall Israel go out to war with this nation? or, Shall Israel enter into alliance with that nation? the Lord's answer was indicated by the breastplate. How these questions were answered, we are not informed. Nothing in the Scriptures tells us, and we have no tradition even that gives any very clear answer. We know that they had the Urim and Thummim and that the answer was indicated in some way with the precious stones of the breastplate, but just how, nobody knows.

SOME INTERESTING LETTERS

DEAR FRIENDS:—

Enclosed find report for the year's work in literature for the blind. Previous to March 1, 1911, the work of transcribing the SCRIPTURE STUDIES into type for the blind was in its inceptive stage and no systematic record was kept.

However, at this time, having secured financial aid from the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society and from others who had become interested in the work, it becomes expedient to adopt a business method.

Itemized, the work at present is as follows:

Books in circulation since March 1	103
Sold, complete copies, Vol. 1, in 7 parts	2
Sold, parts of Vol. 1	2
Books on hand	700
50 copies Vol. 1 in New York Point, in	7 parts
26 copies Vol. 1, English Braille	3 parts
25 copies TABERNACLE SHADOWS	2 parts
Balance in tracts, sermons, TOWER articles, etc.	
Copies sent to British office, Eng. Braille, Vol. 1	9
Copies TABERNACLE SHADOWS	3
Copies to South Africa, Vol. 1 and TABERNACLE SHADOWS, each	1
Received	$267.41
Expended for supplies, etc.	91.49
Balance	$175.92

The labor has been the free-will offering of the Lords' people, confining expenses to the purchase of necessary supplies.

Sincerely yours in the Lord's service,

F. B. GOULD,
Librarian Gould Free Library for the Blind.

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:—

Our three elders are doing good work, and we are all striving to grow in grace and knowledge and love. I pray constantly that daughter and I may be helps and not hindrances to the class. The hardest trial that has come to me during the years has been the spirit of disapproval among certain classes of truth-people against any kind of prosperity—temporal and spiritual.

After all the talk we hear, I have often seen the poor treat the rich in much meaner way than I have ever seen the rich treat the poor. It seems that many people hate everybody who has more of anything than they have. I simply cannot comprehend such a spirit, and surely the Kingdom class cannot have any such spirit—regardless of professions along other lines!

Just as I desire the Master's patience when I am ignorant and out of the way, I pray for patience toward all. I already love these—sincerely—but our own children, whom we love dearly, sometimes try our patience. "Cast not away your confidence, . . . for ye have need of patience," is often in my mind, with the testimony that Enoch had, that he pleased God.

So long as this peace of pleasing God is mine I can endure the contradiction of sinners, remembering how the Lord "endured the cross, despising the shame." Ours is a wonderful hope—not a floating, but an anchored one.

Now, a question please: Is it the part of wisdom for a pilgrim to begin a public lecture by declaring that we do not believe in the divinity of Christ, the immortality of the soul, eternal torment and the Trinity, and not explain clearly what we do believe?

The impression gathered is that we do not believe in the prehuman existence of our Lord, future life for mankind, penalty for sin, nor the holy Spirit!

The statement in January 15 TOWER satisfies me perfectly; but many did not seem to fully grasp it. The humanity of Jesus, the Deity of Christ; the personality of the holy Spirit in Father and Son; immortality for Jesus and the church—The Christ; everlasting life for many others, etc.—all this is a clear, comprehensive statement.

After a pilgrim had made the first-mentioned declaration in an Illinois town recently, the men who had attended the meeting, on invitation of a merchant-brother, went to him next day and said, "You need never talk to us again, for we will not listen." I shall be so glad when the "pure language" is turned to the poor, bewildered people—for how can they understand the now often misstated facts? Some of the friends of the truth have been its greatest enemies!

Once I heard a pilgrim (now out of the truth) say that all modern conveniences were of the devil; all moral reforms were of the devil, and all education was of the devil—in fact, that everything but ignorance (and himself, perhaps) was of the devil!

I thought he was a child of darkness, fit for the "dark ages," and I was relieved when he was no longer a pilgrim, and not surprised when he was entirely out of the truth and an opposer of the truth.

I have heard testimonials in which friends "rejoiced" because ignorant, "glorying in their shame"—because "not many wise are called"—apparently determined to remain as ignorant and unreasonable as possible—counting it a virtue! Surely we are "called" to be educated in the school of Christ!

Often I find it is not so much the truth that people oppose as misapprehensions gathered from misstatements of the friends. The real truth is beautiful and satisfying, and acceptable when understood.

Your Easter sermon was lucid enough to be easily understood by any of average intelligence. I rejoiced in this as I read it.

Yours in Blessed Hope, ———.

BEREAN LESSON QUESTION BOOKS

FOR TABERNACLE SHADOWS and for SCRIPTURE STUDIES, Vols. I., II. and V., are now in stock. Price five cents each—fifty cents per dozen, postpaid.

Many of the Classes find these questions very helpful. The difficulty with many Classes in the past has been that not every one has the teaching ability of drawing the information of the lessons from the Class. The successful class leader has little to say except as he sums up the answer to each question after it has been discussed by the Class; or, if the question be not understood by the Class, he may often render assistance by paraphrasing it and, if possible, simplifying it.

Excellent as public preaching is we believe that the Lord's people learn more in Berean Classes than by listening to any sermon. Thought is stimulated, quickened.

HOW JESUS PREACHED TO SPIRITS IN PRISON

"Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened in the spirit, by which [two experiences—death and resurrection] he preached unto the spirits in prison."—1 Peter 3:18, 19.

This text has been made the basis for some peculiar presentations. From it some have deduced an intermediate state lasting between death and the resurrection. Others have claimed it as an authority for the doctrine of purgatory. The difficulty in every case seems to be the failure to remember that the Bible always and everywhere teaches that the dead are really dead, that they knew nothing, and that, therefore, it would be impossible to do any preaching to the dead humans. Undoubtedly the theory that people are more alive after they die than when they were alive is responsible for nearly all of the foolish things which we have all at some time professed to believe.

Before dismissing the thought that these "spirits in prison" are human spirits, let us note the fact that to say, "human spirits," is an absurdity of itself, because human beings are not spirits and spirit beings are not humans. "Who maketh his angels spirits," is the Scriptural proposition. True, we do sometimes speak of humans as possessing a spirit of life, but by this we merely mean that they possess the power or energy of life, and the same would be equally true of the lower orders of creation, beasts, fish, fowl, etc.

Again, we sometimes speak of the church as spirit beings—begotten of the holy Spirit. Thus the Apostle speaks of the natural man in contrast with the new creature, a spirit being. To appreciate this statement we must remember that the church class receive the begetting of the holy Spirit to the end that, if faithful, they may attain unto a spirit resurrection and become spirit beings, like unto the angels and like to the Redeemer. But we are not spirits yet, except by faith—by hope. However, the context shows the Apostle had no reference to the church, either: we were not in prison; we received the message of salvation through the Apostles.

SPIRITS ONCE DISOBEDIENT

The spirits to whom the message was given had proven themselves disobedient, says St. Peter. He even tells us the time of their disobedience, namely, that it was "in the days of Noah, while the ark was preparing." Surely, if noticing these particulars mentioned in the context, no one would be excusable for misunderstanding this Scripture and considering it in any way applicable to humanity of our day or to humanity in general. However, it is helpful to us to learn the full particulars of the matter. What was their disobedience, and when and how were they inprisoned?

Turning to Genesis 6:1-5, we find there the cause of the disobedience of those angels, who for a time had been permitted to see what they could do for the uplift of humanity, or, rather, permitted to demonstrate that the downward tendency of sin is incurable except in the manner which God has already arranged through Messiah and his glorious reign of a thousand years.

Instead of those angels helping mankind out of sin they helped themselves into sin, and by so doing they increased the depravity amongst humanity until the astounding record is that "the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thought of his heart was only evil continually." The particular sin of those angels was that when they were granted the privilege of materializing—of taking human bodies for the sake of helping and instructing mankind—they misused this power and took to themselves the daughters of men for wives.

Thus these angels came gradually to prefer to live as men amongst men and to rear earthly families rather than to abide in the condition in which they were created—spirit beings, higher than humans. Not only was this wrong in the sense that it was taking a course in opposition to the divine arrangement, but it was wrong also because the thing was done for the cultivation and gratification of lust, and it led to their own moral defilement as well as having a baneful influence upon humanity; for we can readily see that for the angels, of superior powers and intelligence, to become leaders in lustful practices would mean a great influence upon mankind toward sin and defilement of mind and body.

We are particularly told that the offspring of this improper union between the angels and the daughters of men were giants, both physically and mentally superior to the fallen human family—"men of renown." And this statement, that they were "men of renown," was at a time when manhood's estate was reached at a hundred years, and implies that God did not interfere to hinder or stop the progress of sin for perhaps several centuries. In the meantime the race had become so corrupt that apparently only Noah and his family were uncontaminated—all others had more or less come under the influence, directly or indirectly, of these fallen angels or their giant sons. Hence, of Noah it was written (not that he was a perfect man, but), "Now Noah was perfect in his generation" (uncontaminated) and his family apparently the same. Hence these alone were saved in the ark, while all the remainder, more or less contaminated, were destroyed by the flood.

"IN CHAINS OF DARKNESS"

It was then and there that God imprisoned those spirits, angels, who kept not their first estate, and are therefore called fallen angels, devils, demons. They were not imprisoned in some far-off world called hell, nor are they engaged there in stoking fires for the torture of poor humanity. Following the leading of the Scriptures we find that when the flood came they were not destroyed because, while their fleshly bodies which they assumed might indeed perish, yet they would merely dematerialize, or assume their spirit conditions again.

The record is that God cast them down, that he condemned them to an overthrow—that they might not any longer associate with the holy angels, but must be reserved in tartarus—our earth's atmosphere. Here they were imprisoned, not in a special place, but in the sense of having their liberties restrained, "in chains of darkness." They were no longer permitted to materialize and thus to associate with humanity. These things are distinctly told us by St. Jude and St. Peter (Jude 6, 2 Peter 2:4, 5)—an explanation in full harmony with the Genesis account of their fall.

ONCE DISOBEDIENT—STILL DISOBEDIENT

We, of course, cannot know that all of those fallen angels are still in a disloyal condition of heart. On the contrary, in harmony with our text, we may suppose that some of these fallen angels have since repented of their wrong course and it would be none too strong a way to state the matter—that any such repentant ones would surely have terrible experiences as a result. To be obliged to be in close touch and relationship with the more evil and malignant ones and to have knowledge of all their evil designs and efforts would be a terrible experience and, besides this, we may be sure that the rebellious would not hestitate to persecute the repentant ones in every conceivable manner, as they would be lawless, regardless of the divine will.

On the other hand, the repentant ones would be obliged to restrain themselves and to not render evil for evil, knowing that this would be contrary to the divine will. In other words, repentant ones amongst those fallen spirits, influenced by the preaching of Jesus or otherwise, would have a kind of purgatorial experience, and the very thought calls forth our sympathy.

When imprisoned or cut off from the privilege of materialization, many of the fallen spirits, we know not what proportion, continued their active opposition to God, after the manner of Satan. Hence they are spoken of as his angels, his messengers, his servants and he is spoken of as Beelzebub, the prince of demons. Satan, who sinned much earlier than the others, and in a different way, the Scriptures tell us was an angel of a higher rank, or a higher nature, and this superiority of his has made him the prince or ruler over the hosts of fallen spirits.

FIGHTING AGAINST GOD

The fight of Satan and his fallen angels is against God, against all who are in harmony with him, against all the regulations of righteousness, and against all the channels and servants whom the Lord may use. St. Paul's words along this line are forceful; he remarks that God's people contend not merely "with flesh and blood," but also "with wicked spirits in high positions," and the question arises, "Who is sufficient for these things?" The reply is that none is sufficient; without the aid of the Redeemer his church would be quite overcome and vanquished by evil.

Likewise, without the Redeemer's aid through his kingdom, without the binding of Satan, without our Lord's releasing of the world from the bondage of sin and death, there would be no hope of the world's recovery from its present bondage. But with the Apostle we exclaim, "If God be for us, who can be against us?"—Romans 8:31.

THROUGH MEDIUMS AND OBSESSIONS

Satan's original plan of attack was to bring our race under his influence by misrepresentation—by putting darkness for light and light for darkness—for instance, the temptation under which Mother Eve fell. Satan there represented himself as Eve's friend, giving her sound advice. He represented God as having a selfish motive behind his command that our first parents should not eat of the tree of knowledge of good and evil. Satan declared that God had told an untruth when he said that the penalty for sin would be death. Satan declared that man cannot die.

And has he not since kept up the same line of falsification? And has he not deceived the whole world upon this very subject? Do not all peoples in every land believe that when a man dies he does not die, but gets more alive—exactly Satan's lie of the first instance? How few have believed God, even amongst his people who truly love him, and who truly desire to believe the teachings of his Word! We have all been under a kind of "hoodoo." The god of this world [Satan] has blinded our minds on this subject. We are now coming to see that death is the penalty for sin and that the resurrection is the salvation which God has promised and will provide.

Satan has had powerful allies and servants in the fallen angels, and it is through their persistence that his lie has seemingly triumphed over the divine Word—"Dying, thou shalt die." These fallen spirits have made various manifestations in every land for centuries, and thereby have apparently substantiated the theory that a dead man is more alive than when he was alive. Knowing that mankind would have nothing to do with them if their real personality were known they hide their personality and represent themselves as our dead friends who desire to speak with us, either directly or through mediums.

A further desire of these angels is to obsess or to get possession of a human being. Being chained or restrained from the privilege of materialization, the next most desirable thing in their estimation is to gain control over a human being and use his body instead of their own. This is styled obsession, and persons so afflicted today are sent to an insane asylum where, it is estimated, they constitute at least one half of the entire number. In the days of our Lord these were not mistakenly supposed to be insane, but rightly declared to be obsessed. All remember the New Testament account that our Savior and his apostles cast out legions of fallen spirits from humanity.

"KNOW YE NOT THAT THE SAINTS SHALL JUDGE ANGELS?"

We need not discuss this question with Bible Students, for it is too well recognized to be disputed. We suggest a topical study of this subject by all of our readers. See how many times Jesus and the apostles cast out demons, and note the particulars. Although we still have with us spirit mediums and many obsessed, we cannot know whether the proportionate number is greater or less than in our Lord's day. Since the world's population today is so much larger, the same number of evil spirits (which do not increase) would show proportionately less.

But, however that may be, we may assume that some fruitage resulted from the great sermons preached to these in connection with the death and resurrection of our Lord, respecting which St. Peter tells us in our text. Additionally, St. Paul remarks, "Know ye not that the saints shall judge angels?" (1 Corinthians 6:3) We do know that the holy angels need no judging, no trial, hence the Apostle must in some way refer to a trial or judgment or testing of these spirits in prison who were once disobedient, in the days of Noah. And if the judgment or testing is a part of the divine plan, it implies a hope for them, and in conjunction with St. Peter's statement in our text it gives the reasonable inference that the preaching which Jesus did to them was not wholly in vain.

HOW JESUS PREACHED IN DEATH

Here arises another question: If Jesus was really dead, as the Scriptures declare, if "he poured out his soul unto death," and "made his soul an offering for sin," and his soul was not raised from the dead until the third day after his crucifixion, how could he in the meantime preach to spirits in prison, or to anybody else? We reply that he could preach in the same way that the Apostle refers to in respect to Abel, saying, "He, being dead, yet speaketh." (Hebrews 11:4); and again, in the same way that the blood of Abel is said to have cried to God—figuratively. Of one thing we are sure, namely, that Jesus gave no oral address while he was dead. He preached in the way we sometimes refer to when we say, "Actions speak louder than words."

It was the great object lesson which the fallen angels saw that constituted to them the great sermon that gave them a ground for hope. On several occasions the fallen spirits, when commanded to come out of human beings, declared that they knew Jesus. In the long ago they had known him, when, as the Only Begotten of the Father and his representative, he had created them and all things that are made, and was also the mouthpiece for all divine orders and regulations.

The fallen angels realized that he had come into the world to be its Redeemer; they perceived the great stoop that he had made from his lofty position on the heavenly plane to the servant position on the human plane. They admired his loyalty and faithfulness to God, but doubtless believed him to be foolish; they never expected him to arise from the dead. But when they perceived his resurrection on the third day to glory, honor and immortality, "far above angels, principalities and powers and every name that is named," his sermon to them was complete, namely, that "the wages of sin is death," but that "the gift of God is eternal life." (Romans 6:23) And as they realized thus the power of God and the love of God for his human creatures, the Apostle's words imply that this constituted to them a message of hope. Perhaps if they would show full contrition God eventually would have mercy upon them, even as he had had mercy and had provided for humanity.

The lesson is one for all. God's power is infinite, so is his love, his mercy, his goodness. Nevertheless, every wilful sin will have its punishment, a just recompense of reward, and only the willing and obedient shall have the divine favor and everlasting life. Let each apply the lesson to himself.

"THIS ONE THING I DO"

"I determine not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ and Him crucified."—1 Cor. 2:2.

The talented Apostle Paul gives in another place his testimony as to the wisdom of shaking off some of our plans and arrangements and of relaxing our efforts in various directions in order to concentrate our energies upon those things which we can best bring to perfection, saying, "This one thing I do." (Phil. 3:13) The Apostle's one business in life was to be, so far as he was able, acceptable to the Lord, personally, and to do with his might what he could to assist others into the same condition.

In harmony with this, the thought of our text seems to be that whatever the Apostle knew respecting other matters prominent in his day—customs of the age, scientific questions, etc.—he would ignore. He would be a specialist. He would confine his thoughts, words and teachings along this one line; for he thought it was worthy. He had been at Corinth as an ambassador of Christ. He was not there to air his knowledge, but to tell the message of the kingdom. He would make preaching the Gospel his one business, to accomplish which he felt that all of his knowledge and energy were too little.

The Apostle did not determine to ignore all of his knowledge without having a good reason, or purpose therefor. It was because he wished to concentrate all of his attention and influence upon one great subject. That subject was Jesus Christ, Jesus the Anointed; Jesus the Messiah was the main thought of all his preaching. He realized that the great Messiah was a part of the divine program which had been promised—the "Seed" which was to bless all the families of the earth; that Jesus was that great Messiah, and that all men should recognize him, should flock to his standard.

But St. Paul would preach, not only that Jesus was the Messiah, but that he was the crucified Messiah, for he would not be ashamed of the divine teaching. He would preach that God sent forth his Son; and that the Son had left the glory he had with the Father, had lived on the earth, and had "died, the just for the unjust," for this very purpose—that he might manifest his obedience to the divine arrangement. In thus preaching Christ and his crucifixion, the Apostle was not ignoring the fact that there was to be a church; Jesus was the Anointed Head over his body, the church. Hence, in preaching Jesus the Anointed One, St. Paul was showing how the divine plan was being outworked under divine supervision, and what the glorious results would be. To these things he had determined that all his time and attention should go.

How evident it is that today many ministers have lost something possessed by the Apostle, who thus recognized the importance of the Gospel of Christ! This loss very largely accounts for the various peculiar topics advertised for religious meetings; sometimes the topic is politics; sometimes temperance; sometimes woman-suffrage. The reason for this change from the old-time style of preaching is that during the dark

ages the Gospel became perverted, misrepresented; and that now people are ashamed of what was formerly preached—"Be good and go to heaven; be bad and go to hell!" It is not a great message. We cannot wonder that an astute mind grasps the whole thing in a few minutes. We are rather glad, indeed, that ministers are ashamed to preach what their creeds profess, and that, therefore, their creeds must be kept in the background.

"NOT ASHAMED OF THE GOSPEL OF CHRIST"

For us, however, who see the importance of the Gospel, the case is different. We know that this Gospel of the kingdom, of which the Apostle was not ashamed, teaches that the elect church is to be the bride of Christ; that Messiah is to bless the whole world; that Jesus is the Messiah; that he was crucified, dead, buried, raised from the dead by his Father; that his crucifixion was a part of the great divine plan, and that without this very arrangement no salvation could be effected, either for the church, or for the world in the future. Therefore, as the Apostle did, we are preaching Jesus, the Crucified One, who died for our sins, who rose again for our justification, and who, coming in glory with his church, is the great Messiah, to bless the world through natural Israel.

Because we have found the truth we, like St. Paul, feel constrained to preach nothing but this message. The same truth that influenced him should influence us. If, therefore, any of the brethren feel disposed to go out after the manner of Babylon and preach something else, here is the reproof—"Not . . . anything save Jesus Christ and him crucified." This is the only subject. St. Paul would be as though he knew nothing else. This subject would be the one thing to which he would give his time and attention. Let it be so with us!

Beloved, as you value the glorious hope set before you, we beseech you that you give no heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils, as the Apostle terms them (1 Tim. 4:1); but that with fixedness of purpose you apply yourselves to the one thing to which you are called, and which as prospective heirs of Messiah's kingdom you are privileged to do. Let us not forget that we are a "peculiar people," separate from the great body of nominal Christians, as well as from the world, having higher hopes, aims and ambitions, and favored with a clearer insight into the deep things of God, having been called out of our former darkness into his marvelous light. Thus separate from the world and from Christians who partake largely of the spirit of the world, what wonder if we find them all out of harmony with us, and either ignoring or opposing us!

We expect such opposition; and we know that it will continue until our course has been finished in death. If we endure hardness as good soldiers for the truth's sake, no matter how that hardness may come, in our efforts to do the Lord's will and to advance the interests of his kingdom, then we are presenting our bodies as living sacrifices in the divine service. To be really in his service includes both the careful and continual study of God's plan, and the imbibing of its spirit, leading to an enthusiastic zeal for its accomplishment, and to activity to the extent of ability in its service, whatever the cost or sacrifice it may require.

If faithful in this service we have neither time nor disposition to give heed to other themes having no bearing on the one thing to which we have solemnly dedicated our lives. If we have consecrated all to God our time is not our own; and consequently we have none to spare for the investigation of theories built upon any other foundation than that laid down in the Bible. Nor have we time to devote to the ideas and pursuits which engross the world's attention, many of which are harmless or even elevating in themselves, but which would be harmful and degrading to us if we allow them to occupy consecrated time and to divert our attention from the one thing we ought to be doing.

The Apostle warns us to "Shun profane and vain babblings; for they will increase unto more ungodliness"; but counsels, "Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of Truth"; "Teach no other doctrine, neither give heed to fables and endless genealogies, which minister questions rather than godly edifying which is in faith."—2 Tim. 2:16, 15; 1 Tim. 1:3, 4.

HOW NARROW THIS WAY!

Is not this a very narrow way? Yes, so narrow that our Lord foretold respecting it, "Strait [difficult] is the gate and narrow is the way which leadeth unto [the] life, and few there be that find it!" (Matt. 7:14) It is so narrow that it is wide enough to admit only the Lord's plan and those who are willing to discard all other plans, projects and questionings, and to devote themselves fully to its service; and who are quite willing to bear any reproach it may bring.

Are you endeavoring from day to day to vindicate the divine character and to make known God's righteous ways? Are you diligently studying to make yourself thoroughly familiar with the truth, so that you may indeed be a living epistle known and read of all men within the circle of your influence? Are you indeed a workman that need not be ashamed (2 Tim. 2:15)? Are you of those who have really given themselves to the Lord, saying truthfully to him:

> "Take myself—I will to be
> Ever, only, all for Thee"?

If so, you are just narrow minded enough to say, "This one thing I do; and I make everything else bend to this one thing of showing forth God's praises and of helping others into his marvelous light; and to this end I cultivate and use what talents I possess as a wise steward of my heavenly Father."

Dearly beloved, we impose neither vows nor bondage upon each other, but the call has its own limitations; the Master has directed us to teach all nations (for the Gospel is no longer confined to the Jewish nation), not astronomy nor geology nor any of the vain philosophies about which the world speculate, but—"Observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you."—Matt. 28:20.

This is what the Apostle Paul did. Hear him in his zeal for this one thing to which he had devoted his life: "And I, brethren, when I came unto you, came not with the excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring unto you the mystery of God; for I determined not to know anything among you save Jesus Christ and him crucified. [I riveted your attention on this one thing! I kept this one thing continually before you] . . . And my speech and my preaching were not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and power [of the truth], that your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God."—1 Cor. 2:1-5.

St. Paul was an outspoken, uncompromising teacher. When he knew that he had the truth, he spoke it with confidence, and boldly declared that everything contrary to it is false doctrine. He also taught believers that it was not only their privilege, but their duty to be established in the faith, to know on the evidence of God's Word, why they believed, and to be able to give to every man that inquired a reason for the hope that was in them.

Let it be so with us also. Each consecrated believer should ask himself, "How carefully have I studied that which I recognize as divine truth? How fully capable am I of handling the Sword of the Spirit?" Few indeed are those who can say they have fully digested and assimilated all they have received; and that they have let none of these things slip from memory; that they have so treasured it up in their hearts that it is their meditation by day and by night; that they have a ready answer—a "Thus saith the Lord"—for every man that asks them a reason for the hope that is in them, concerning any point of doctrine; that they can clearly and intelligently portray the divine plan, quote the divine authority for each successive step of it, and, if need be, point out its place in the divine system of types. To gain such proficiency in the Word is the work of a lifetime; but every day should see a closer approximation to that proficiency, and will if we are faithful students and faithful servants of the Truth.

If all the consecrated were thus busily engaged in putting on the armor of God, and in proving it by actual use in zealous endeavor to herald the truth and to help others to stand, there would be no time left for even good temperance reform work, nor for work among the slums of the great cities, nor for the doctrine of healing, nor any such things. We have no consecrated time for these matters, which are only side issues and not harmful in themselves, except as they divert attention and consume time which has been consecrated to another and higher use. All these works will be effectually accomplished in the "times of restitution" (Acts 3:19-22), now in the near future. Besides, there are others engaged in these works; we recognize and seek to accomplish the work set before us in the divine plan.

In all the history of the church there has never been a time in which the great adversary has been so active in diverting attention from the truth by introducing unprofitable and irrelevant questions as at present. Just now, when the exaltation and glory of the church are soon to be accomplished, and when the faithful are about to be received into the joy of their Lord, Satan is resorting to every device in order to beguile them of their reward and to frustrate this feature of the divine plan.

But really to frustrate any part of the divine plan is impossible. God has purposed to take out from among men a "little flock," "a people for his name"; and such a company is assuredly being gathered. Yet whether all those now in the race for the prize will surely be of that company, is still an open question. Take heed, beloved, that no man take thy crown. (Rev. 3:11) If any come short of their privileges and prove

unworthy of the rich inheritance, there are others who will quickly fill their places.

Our observation of those consecrated ones who have permitted other themes than this "Gospel of the kingdom" to engross time and attention, leads us to advise such to be very jealous in husbanding time and talent for the ministry of the Gospel, leaving all subjects outside of this, however interesting they may be, to those who prefer to devote time to them now; and to the future life for ourselves, when all knowledge shall be ours. We have invariably observed that those who, for any avoidable cause, have turned aside from the true and only Gospel, are quickly turned out of the way or greatly hindered in their course toward the "prize" of our "high calling."

May we, dear brethren, be able truthfully to express our position in the words of the Apostle: "This one thing I do; forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus"; "I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified."—Phil. 3:13, 14; 1 Cor. 2:2.

CHRIST MADE A CURSE FOR ISRAEL

It has escaped the attention of many Bible Students that, while the Israelites had many advantages every way under their Law Covenant (Rom. 3:1, 2), yet each one who failed to meet all the requirements of that Law Covenant came under a curse, or sentence, not upon individuals of other nations. Thus it is written, "Cursed is every one [every Israelite] that continueth not in all the words of the Law [Covenant] to do them."—Gal. 3:10.

The Apostle shows that this curse was upon only those who were under that covenant, saying, "What things soever the Law [Covenant] saith, it saith unto them who are under the Law [Covenant]" (Rom. 3:19) Moses also made the same statement—"The Lord our God made a covenant with us in Horeb. The Lord made not this covenant with our fathers, but with us, even us who are all of us here alive this day." (Deut. 5:2, 3) Indeed, no other arrangement would have been just, for the blessings of that covenant and its promises of life were to the one nation. (Rom. 9:4) How, then, could its curse extend beyond the nation which enjoyed its favor and privileges?

The blessings of that Law Covenant were earthly, and so also were its curses; with one exception, noted further along, neither blessings nor curses related to the everlasting future. The future had already been determined for them and for all the race of Adam, in the death sentence pronounced in Eden. Nothing short of the ransom price—the corresponding price—which our Lord gave long afterwards, could set aside that original sentence, and secure for mankind a complete release from the sentence of death. The sin-offerings of Israel's Day of Atonement were not of permanent value, but only for a year in advance, and were, therefore, repeated yearly.

THE LAW COVENANT GUARANTEED LIFE TO ONLY ONE MAN

The blessings and curses of the Law Covenant were very particularly explained to Israel. (See Deut. 28, entire chapter.) This covenant included every member of the nation of Israel, so that they shared in common the blessings or the curses. There was one provision, however, for an individual, namely, that the man who would fully obey all the requirements of the law should live—be guaranteed lasting life. (Lev. 18:5) Even if Israel may have imagined it possible for all or for many of the nation to thus gain life everlasting, we can see that God never had any such expectation concerning them. He knew from the beginning what he has taught us by experience, as well as by the inspired words of the Apostles, that "By the deeds of the law shall no flesh [i. e., none of the fallen race, needing justification] be justified in God's sight."—Rom. 3:20.

The Man Christ Jesus, who obeyed the law absolutely, was the one in the divine purpose for whom the provision was made, that "He that doeth these things shall live." Consequently, he had a right to life everlasting, and therefore might have asked for more than twelve legions of angels to defend him from those who sought his life. Had he done so, he would have received them. (Matt. 26:53) But he laid down his life. The one death, begun at Jordan and "finished" three and a half years later at Calvary, accomplished two things: one for Israel only, the other for the whole world.

Since the children of Israel, as well as the other nations, were Adam's posterity, they in common with others shared his sentence of death, and were redeemed by our Lord's offering of himself a sin-offering and corresponding price for Adam and those who lost life in Adam. (Rom. 5:12, 18) But since Israel alone, and no other nation or family or people of earth, had been brought under the terms of the Law Covenant made with them at Mt. Sinai, therefore only Israelites needed to be "redeemed from the curse of the Law [Covenant]."—Gal. 3:13.

That the one Man, Christ Jesus, could justly redeem our race is stated by the Apostle, and is clearly evident when we see that all men were sentenced in the one man Adam; but how could one man redeem the multitudinous nation of Israel from the curse of their Law Covenant?

MOSES THE TYPICAL FATHER OF ISRAEL

We answer that in connection with Israel's covenant there is a point that few have noticed. It is that God dealt with only one man in connection with the making of that Law Covenant; and that man was Moses, who stood in the position of a father to the whole nation, the nation being regarded and treated as children under age.

See Moses' own words regarding the matter: "And Moses said unto the Lord, Wherefore hast thou afflicted thy servant? And wherefore have I not found favor in thy sight that thou layest the burden of all this people upon me? Have I conceived all this people? Have I begotten them, that thou shouldest say unto me, Carry them in thy bosom, as a nursing father bearing the sucking child, unto the land which thou swearest unto their fathers? Whence should I have flesh to give unto all this people? for they weep unto me, saying, Give us flesh that we may eat. I am not able to bear all this people alone, because it is too heavy for me. And if thou deal thus with me, kill me, I pray thee, out of hand, if I have found favor in thy sight; and let me not see my wretchedness."—Num. 11:11-15.

The Lord talked with Moses in the Mount. The Lord gave the tables of the Law to Moses. And Moses spoke to the people, gave them the law and bound them by the terms of the Law Covenant.

"Moses alone shall come near the Lord."—Exod. 24:2.

"As the Lord spoke unto Moses, so did the children of Israel."—Num. 5:4.

"The people cried unto Moses; and Moses prayed unto the Lord."—Num. 11:2.

God "sent Moses his servant."—Psa. 105:26.

"They envied Moses also in the camp."—Psa. 106:16.

"He [God] said that he would destroy them, had not Moses, his chosen, stood before him in the breach."—Psa. 106:23.

"Remember ye the Law of Moses my servant."—Mal. 4:4.

"Moses . . . hath in every city them that preach him."—Acts 15:21.

"Did not Moses give you the law?"—John 7:19.

"What did Moses command you?"—Mark 10:3.

"One accuseth you, even Moses, in whom ye trust."—John 5:45.

All Israel were "baptized unto [into] Moses, in the cloud and in the sea."—1 Cor. 10:2.

"He that despised Moses' law died without mercy."—Heb. 10:28.

"The law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ."—John 1:17.

So thoroughly was the one man Moses the representative and typical father of the nation of Israel that God could and did propose its destruction and the fulfilment of all his engagements with Moses' family instead. (Exod. 32:10, 31, 32) It was thus, as God's representative on the one hand, and as Israel's representative on the other, that Moses could be and was the mediator of the Law Covenant between God and that nation.

CHRIST THE "EVERLASTING FATHER"

When the Man Christ Jesus, by full obedience to the Law Covenant, became entitled to life everlasting under its provisions, he had attained the right to "Moses' seat," the right to supersede Moses as the lawgiver and representative of the nation. Of him Moses bore witness, saying, "A Prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me; him shall ye hear in all things."—Acts 3:22; Deut. 18:18, 19.

By fulfilling the requirements of the Law Covenant and by his obedience even unto death, Christ became the heir of its promise of life, and the prospective Mediator of the prospective New Covenant, based upon that better and everlasting sacrifice for sins, which, therefore, needed not to be repeated yearly, and was effective, not for Israel only, but for all the families of the earth, for "this Man," "the Man Christ Jesus, gave himself a ransom for all." (1 Tim. 2:6) Hence this Gospel of the New Covenant was for the Jew first and also for the Greek (or Gentile). Thus the one sacrifice, finished at Calvary, did not only a special work for Israel, but also a general work of redemption for the world, including Israel, which suretied the New Cove-

nant and in due time will make it operative for all of mankind.

Thus seen, the expression, "Christ is the end [fulfilment] of the Law [Covenant] for righteousness [justification] to every one that believeth" (Rom. 10:4), can apply only to Jews who have by faith accepted Christ. It cannot apply to others—either to those who never were Jews and who consequently were never under that covenant, or to those who still trust in Moses' covenant and who are still vainly seeking life by obedience to its provisions, law, etc.

ISRAEL NOW UNDER THE CURSES OF THE LAW

It is a common mistake to suppose the Scriptures to teach that the Law Covenant died, or was destroyed by our Lord. It became dead in the sense that its proffer of life ceased when our Lord Jesus fulfilled the requirements of the Law Covenant, and inherited all of its blessings and life-rights; but it lives in the sense that its blessings and curses still cling to Israel, as so many assets and liabilities. Hence all the children of Jacob are still bound by this Law Covenant, unless they have died to it.

Only those who realize that they cannot gain everlasting life through their union with Moses (the Law Covenant) are ready to abandon all hope of saving their life by that union with Moses and to become dead to all such expectations, and to accept the death of Christ, the ransom price for Adam and all his race, as the basis of a new hope of a new life. Hence, only those Israelites who by faith reckoned themselves as hopelessly dead under the Law Covenant, and as risen with Christ to a new life secured by his sacrifice, and who in will are dead to sin—only such could be united to Christ as members of the "seed" of the Abrahamic Covenant.

Thus, according to the Apostle's reasoning, the idea of so blending the two covenants that Christians are united to both Moses and Christ, is wholly out of the question. Gentiles, who never were under the Law Covenant, could not, of course, be released from it; and in order for a Jew to be released from that Covenant he must by faith recognize that Jesus Christ fulfilled the terms of the Law Covenant, and then must consecrate his flesh to death with Christ as reckonedly a member of Christ's flesh, that so doing he might be reckoned as a "new creature," united to the Lord as a member of his spiritual body.

The text, "Christ is the end [or fulfilment] of the Law [Covenant] for righteousness to every one [under it] that believeth" (Rom. 10:4), does not conflict with the above; for only believers are specified. Eph. 2:15, "Having abolished in his flesh the enmity of the law of commandments contained in ordinances," and Col. 2:14, refer to Jewish believers, for whom the handwriting of ordinances is blotted out, while Col. 2:20 refers to the Gentile converts who must become dead to the "rudiments of the world," before entering upon the Covenant of sacrifice, even as the Jews must become dead to the rudiments of their Law Covenant.

ISRAEL'S PRESENT EXPERIENCE A PART OF THEIR COVENANT

That the Law Covenant with Israel is still binding upon that nation is further evident from the fact that upon their national rejection of Christ they were nationally blinded until the end of the Gospel age (Rom. 11:7, 25), and that God declares that he has not cast away his people of that covenant, but that under the New Covenant he will open their eyes to see Christ as the only door of hope, that of a new life purchased with his own blood.—Rom. 11:27, 29; compare Deut. 30:1-9.

Meanwhile, we have the evidence that their covenant continues in force in the fact that, as a nation, they have for centuries been receiving the very "curses" specified under their covenant. (See Deut. 28:15-67) Verses 49-53 describe the Roman siege, etc.; verses 64-67 describe the condition of Israel since. As shown in previous writings the Lord (Lev. 26:18-45) declared the symbolical "seven times," 2,520 years, of Israel's subjection to the Gentiles, and their deliverance—A. D. 1914. Thus their present experience was foretold as a part of their covenant.

Israel as a nation is still bound by that covenant which they at first supposed would bring life, but which experience proved could bring them only death, because of the weakness of their flesh and their inability to fulfil its requirements expressed in its law of Ten Commandments. There is only one door of escape from it, viz., Christ, and the New [Law] Covenant which is soon to be made with Israel. God shut them up to this one and only hope (Gal. 3:23), and he promises that by and by, when the Gospel church, the body of Christ, has been selected, he will open their blind eyes and cause them to see Christ in his true character—as their Redeemer from sin and their Deliverer from death and their covenant of death.—Rom. 11:25-29.

CHRIST MADE A CURSE FOR ISRAEL ONLY

As to the significance of the statement, "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us, for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree" (Gal. 3:13), the Apostle in this text is speaking, not to Christians in general, but to those Christians who had passed from Moses into Christ—out of the Law Covenant into the Covenant of sacrifice with Christ, as members of his body. It would not be true to say that Christ redeemed us Gentiles from the curse of the law, for we were never under the law. Those, therefore, who were under the curse of the law were Jews. The Apostle classifies himself with Israel, some of whom were in Galatia, some in Palestine, etc. "Christ hath been made a curse for us; for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree."

The particular sense in which Christ redeemed the Jews was as a nation and not as individuals. The whole nation was involved in the contract made at Sinai. Consequently, in order to meet all the requirements of the people as a whole, the one who would redeem Israel from the baneful effects of the Law Covenant must suffer the extreme penalty imposed by that Covenant. Therefore to redeem Israel from that condemnation our Lord had to be crucified.

As for the remainder of mankind, they suffer from the sentence of death that came upon Adam, but no particular form of death was implied. The Jews alone needed this particular form of death for their release. The whole nation was under this Law Covenant because the contract was made with them as a nation and through one mediator, Moses. Our Lord will redeem the whole nation from their failure to keep that law, from the condemnation of that law, by instituting the New Covenant, by taking over into the New Covenant all those who were under the old Law Covenant.

The New Covenant will go into operation in due time. Christ has already redeemed the Jews and all mankind in the sense that he has laid down the ransom price; but he has not yet redeemed them in the sense of recovering them nor even in the sense of applying that price. At the end of this age he will apply the price for Israel and the world; and then the New Covenant arrangements will go into effect for the blessing of all who come under its regulations.

THE KINGDOM A PRIZE

Matthew 13:44-53.—August 4.

Text:—*"Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you."*—Matt. 6:33.

Today we have further precious lessons from the Great Teacher respecting his kingdom. The parable of the treasure hid in the field, and the parable of the pearl of great price, both picture to us the great value of the kingdom of glory which is ultimately to be established amongst men for the blessing of the world. These parables also furnish lessons of what it will cost to secure a share, a place in that kingdom. A third parable of the lesson treats of the embryo kingdom; that is to say, the parable of the net cast into the sea, pictures the condition of this present age, during which the elect, or kingdom class, the bride, is being found and gathered by the Lord's providences.

"TREASURE HID IN THE FIELD"

This is not one of the parables which Jesus expounded. His people, therefore, are left to exercise their judgment of its meaning, under the guidance of the holy Spirit and the light shed upon it by other Scriptures. Indeed, there might be more than one application of it correct. For instance, we might apply the parable to our Lord Jesus and say that he bought the whole world at the cost of all he had, and that he purchased the world because of the "treasure" which it contained. And that treasure might consist of a variety of treasures of different values—for instance, the church, the bride class, the Lord's special "treasure," and such of the world as will ultimately receive and be blessed by the Messianic kingdom.

But our preference of thought is that the Great Teacher referred, not to himself at all, but to those whom he instructed. By virtue of his own covenant of sacrifice, the kingdom was already promised to him, and he, in turn, in the Father's name, was inviting those who had the ears to hear, and hearts to appreciate, to become members of his bride class—members of his kingdom class.

He recommends that these should view the kingdom after the illustration of this parable. Suppose in their journeying they saw a field for sale at a certain price, and suppose, upon examination of it, they found it to contain a great treasure. The treasure might consist of very excellent soil, especially

suited to their purpose, or it might consist of a valuable vein of precious metal, or it might consist of money buried long centuries ago and forgotten, and not belonging to the owner of the field more than to others who might find it. In such a case, the parable suggests, any one of ordinary intelligence would be willing to invest everything that he possessed to acquire the title.

So the Master declared to those who heard him then, and to us who receive his words now, that he has information to give respecting a great treasure, a priceless treasure, which can be obtained, but only by the expenditure of great energy and the investment of everything of value. The great treasure is the share in the Messianic kingdom—that by accepting the terms of discipleship we may become not only sons of God, but, if children, then heirs of God and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ our Lord to his heavenly inheritance. This inheritance was the same as was promised to the seed of Abraham, and we acquired an interest or share in it, not by being the actual seed of Abraham and the actual heirs to the kingdom, but by becoming Messiah's bride and joint-heir.

When we think how much time and energy are put forth, and how much money and influence are expended to obtain some little, petty earthly honor of worldly renown and glory, and when we reflect that these at most will last but a few years and be unsatisfactory at best, then we can appreciate the better the glory, honor and immortality which God has in reservation for the "called and chosen and faithful," the bride, the Lamb's wife.

A PEARL OF GREAT VALUE

In the days of our Savior pearls were represented amongst the most precious and most desirable of jewels, and the larger and more nearly perfect the pearl the greater its value. The Great Teacher used this familiar matter as the basis for a lesson on the value of the kingdom. The merchant of the parable found a pearl so superior in every respect to all other pearls that he considered it cheap to give everything that he possessed to become the owner of that pearl.

This, said the Master, illustrates the value of the kingdom, with its glory, honor and immortality, which I am inviting an elect, saintly little flock to share with me. Those who prize it properly will show their appreciation by the amount they will be willing and glad to pay for it. Whether a man be wealthy or poor, learned or ignorant, influential or otherwise, the cost of this kingdom pearl of great value will be—his all. It cannot be had for less.

The wealthiest or most talented person in the world could not obtain a share in that kingdom if he kept back one single atom of his possessions; the price of the kingdom is self-sacrifice, even unto death, and nothing less will secure it. Nor would any sacrifice that we could make secure a share in this kingdom for us, except as our sacrifice would first be made acceptable in God's sight through the precious merit of our Redeemer's sacrifice, which he finished at Calvary.

THE PARABLE OF A FISH NET

We are not to think of the kingdom as like a net, but to understand that the embryo kingdom resembles a fishing experience with a net, in which were gathered all kinds of fish, which were brought to shore and sorted. This is a parable of the embryo kingdom because it relates to a work done in this age, in connection with the finding of the "little flock" who will constitute the kingdom in glory. The Lord during this age has not been fishing for all kinds of fish; he has not been seeking for all kinds of people. He has been calling, drawing especially, and dealing with only the elect, only the saintly.

But, incidentally, a variety of other kinds of fish have gotten into the Gospel net, some from worldly ambitions, some because religious systems are a good matrimonial field, others because of social privileges and standing, others because they desire to breathe a moral atmosphere, others because they would use religion as a cloak for business enterprises, etc. But the suitable fish, which the Lord is seeking, which alone will constitute the kingdom class, are those who hear his message with joy and count the cost and appreciate the situation and desire to be "bond servants of the Lord Jesus Christ." They are willing to suffer with him now that they may be glorified together with him in his kingdom.

The parable tells us that "when the net was full it was drawn ashore" and the fish sorted. This evidently signifies that there will come a time in the end of this age when the Lord will have gathered a sufficient number of saintly ones to serve his purpose—to complete the number foreordained by the Father to be members of the elect church in glory. Then the fishing will cease. Who can say that the opportunity for entering the "net" as one of the true "fish" of the kind the Lord is seeking may not be almost at an end? Who can say that the Gospel net, with its full assortment of churchianity of every style, will not soon be drawn ashore that the suitable, the elect, may be gathered into the kingdom?

The unsuitable "fish" of this parable correspond with the "tares" of the parable considered a week ago. The "furnace of fire" will be the same "time of trouble" which will come upon the whole world of mankind very shortly. The unsuitable fish in the net are all church members—the unprofessing world are not represented in the parable at all.

Jesus asked his disciples if they understood the parable. They answered, yes, and he told them to consider his parables as a householder would consider his reserve of food supplies, from which from time to time truths "both new and old" would be brought.

Our text emphasizes this study. If the kingdom is the pearl, and the treasure, which the Master indicated—if we believe his testimony, then by all means let us show our faith, not merely by professions, but in every act and word. Let us seek the kingdom as the pre-eminent matter of our lives, in comparison with which all other things are inferior, and, as St. Paul declared, "not worthy to be compared." If seeking the kingdom seems to hinder some of our earthly prospects, so much the better. The Master said it must cost us our all. Our earthly considerations we have left in his hands. Let him apportion our earthly blessings according to his wisdom of what will be most helpful to us in making our "calling and election sure" to a place in the kingdom.

GOD'S WHEAT FIELD

MATTHEW 13:24-30, 36-43.—JULY 28.

TEXT:—*"Gather ye together first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them, but gather the wheat into My Garner."*—Verse 30.

Our International Sunday School Lessons are specially helpful this year. We are glad that the selection contains so many lessons on the kingdom. This topic heretofore has not had sufficient consideration, considering its prominence in the Bible—from the promise made to Abraham, recorded in Genesis, to the records of Revelation, representing the full establishment of the kingdom, its binding of Satan, and its thousand years of prosperity, resulting in the bringing of "every creature in heaven and in earth" to worship and praise the Almighty, and in the abolishment of sin, tears and death.—Gen. 22:18; Rev. 20:2; 21:4; 5:13.

Today's study is another of the kingdom parables, and one of the few which the Master particularly explained, and in harmony with which all the other parables are to be interpreted. Again it is the embryo kingdom that is pictured, and not the kingdom in glory; in other words, this parable also relates to this Gospel age, and the work of selecting the church. It therefore pictures the entire age from start to finish.

"THE FIELD IS THE WORLD"

Our Lord's personal ministry was to the Jews only, and likewise his disciples labored only with the Jews for the fixed period of time—until the end of "the seventy weeks" of the promise of divine favor to that nation. Those symbolic weeks ended three and a half years after Jesus' crucifixion. Then the door was thrown open to the Gentiles also, Cornelius being the first convert.—Acts 10.

This parable also shows us the very commencement of the Lord's call for his bride from amongst all nations, and not from the Jews alone, although in the divine plan it was necessary that they should have the first opportunity. So St. Paul declares, saying to the Jews, "It was necessary that the Gospel should be preached first unto you, but seeing ye reject it, . . . lo, we turn to the Gentiles." (Acts 13:46) The entire world constituted the "field" for the sowing of the "good seed," and the "good seed" is not any and every kind of a message, but is strictly defined, "the Gospel of the kingdom."

Jesus and the Apostles sowed this "good seed," and all his true followers since have been authorized to continue the work in his name, and have more or less done so. But the adversary, Satan, as pointed out here in the parable, brought in false doctrines, false teachings, a different kind of seed from the kingdom "seed," and sowed this everywhere over the wheat field. The result is that today the "tares" are so plentiful, and so conspicuous that they think they are the "wheat," and the world in general so considers them.

The wheat class are considered "a peculiar people." Their

hopes and ambitions in life are toward bearing good fruit, and "showing forth the praises of him who called them out of darkness." Of their good fruits the Apostle mentions meekness and humility, and these tend to bow their heads, while the "tares" stand proudly up, erect, in the display of their "form of godliness," which, however, lacks the power.

"LET BOTH GROW TOGETHER"

The Lord knew all the time what Satan would do in the way of perverting the truth through false doctrines, which would tend to make void and belittle the Gospel of the kingdom and the children of the kingdom; but he allowed the matter to go on, fully assured that he would have in the end the crop which he desired, and very content to allow a great lesson to be taught by the presence of the "tares" and the ultimate treatment accorded the "wheat."

The Lord could have hindered the adversary from bringing in the false doctrines in the early centuries, or he could have separated centuries ago between the wheat and tare classes, but this was not according to his intention, as the parable shows. He purposed to "let both grow together until the harvest." So it has been true that Christians and imitation Christians have lived side by side in the same city, in the same house, and oftentimes in the same family—the one the result of the true Gospel message of the kingdom, leading to a full consecration and begetting of the holy Spirit, and to the entrance upon a new life; the other with merely "a form of godliness," intermixed with worldly wisdom, earthly ambition and selfish desires.

But the tares are not to grow on forever. Just so surely as there was a beginning of this age, there will be an ending. As surely as there was a sowing time for the good seed, there will be a reaping time, a harvest time. In the Common Version the words, "The harvest is the end of the world," have been seriously misunderstood. It does not mean the end of time, nor the end of the earth—its destruction—nor the end of divine favor. It merely means the end of the present age—the close of the present dispensation. This age will close when it has accomplished its intended work—when the full number of God's elect shall have been found faithful and ready for the "garner."

"IN THE TIME OF THE HARVEST"

This expression signifies that the harvest of this age will not be an instantaneous work, but a gradual one, requiring time. There is good reason for believing that the harvest of this age is a period of forty years, as the harvest of the Jewish age was of that length. In this time of the harvest two things will be accomplished: (1) The tares will be gathered into bundles, ready for the burning—destruction. (2) The wheat, at the same time, will be gathered into the garner—the heavenly garner. This gathering into the heavenly garner is elsewhere represented as being the change from earthly to heavenly conditions, which will be accomplished for the bride class in the end of the harvest, by the first resurrection. These will "all die like men." At the appointed time their resurrection change will take place and be invisible to men—"sown in weakness, raised in power; sown in dishonor, raised in glory; sown an animal body, raised a spirit body"; "They shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years." —1 Cor. 15:42-44; Rev. 20:6.

BURNING OF THE TARES

"They shall gather out of his kingdom all things which offend, and them which do iniquity; . . . there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth." Let us remember that these tares are not all the world of mankind, but merely that portion of them associated with the kingdom class—that portion which now verily believe that they are God's people, as the Pharisees considered themselves in the harvest of the Jewish age. There will be two classes amongst these tares: one class, "doers of iniquity (inequity, unrighteousness)," the other class, those that have caused others to stumble. Doubtless this will include many teachers and preachers, and many doers of wonderful works.

But we must not forget that we are considering a parable, and that the "tares" are symbolical, and likewise the "furnace" and the "fire." The interpretation is that, in the end of this age, the harvest time, there will be a great "time of trouble" for all nations, society, governments, financial institutions, etc. The wheat class will be saved from that "time of trouble" by the resurrection change. But the tares will not be saved from it; they will be cast into the trouble and have their portion with the hypocrites.

That trouble will not last forever. Many Scriptures seem to show that it will be terrific but of very short duration. It will be on the earth, and not in some far-off place. When the fire of that great day of anarchy and trouble shall cease to burn, there will be no more tares, there will be no more people having mere forms of godliness and pretensions for the kingdom, begotten of error. All humanity will be greatly humbled, and, according to the Scriptures, ready and anxious for Messiah's kingdom, which will then be established. It will be "the desire of all nations." (Hag. 2:7) Those formerly tares, as well as the remainder of the groaning creation, will welcome it and its blessings. In that kingdom the righteous, the garnered, glorified wheat class "shall shine forth as the sun" for the blessing of all the families of the earth.—Matt. 13:43; Gal. 3:29.

EMBRYO KINGDOM PARABLES

Mark 4:26-32; Matthew 13:33.—July 21.

Text:—"*Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is done in heaven.*"—Matt. 6:10.

Many of us in the past have overlooked the fact that nearly all of the teachings of the Redeemer appertain to the kingdom —his Messianic kingdom. Some of us indeed had gotten the unscriptural thought that Messiah's kingdom would consist merely of a sovereignty in the hearts of his followers and in the present life.

Now we see the real import and connection of the Great Teacher's numerous utterances on this subject. As he taught us to pray, "Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth, even as it is done in heaven," he meant that we should have in mind God's glorious promise that eventually, through Messiah's kingdom, ignorance, sin and death will all be overthrown, and the willing and obedient of mankind will be released from these until "every knee shall bow and every tongue confess" to the glory of God.

Our Lord meant that we should connect this kingdom with the great promise made to Abraham, "In thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed." The Master's teachings and the message which he commissioned us to give in his name is the Gospel of the kingdom—the message of coming glory, and the message that now God is selecting a "little flock" to be the spiritual seed of Abraham, joint-heirs with Jesus in the throne of that kingdom. Paul refers to this in Galatians 3:29: "And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise."

Today's study sets before us a number of Jesus' parables respecting the kingdom. The majority of these refer to the kingdom class of the present time rather than to the kingdom in its fully developed state during the thousand years of his glory. All of God's consecrated people, begotten of the holy Spirit during this age—since Pentecost—constitute together the kingdom class, the kingdom in embryo—unfinished, undeveloped, incomplete. Some of these embryo members of the kingdom may yet fail to make their calling and election sure, and they may become "castaways" as respects the glory and honor to which they have been called.

THE KINGDOM DEVELOPMENT SLOW

The first illustration of our lesson is that God's kingdom in its present embryotic condition is of slow, gradual, methodical development, covering the entire period of this Gospel age. It is like seed cast into the ground, which brings its maturity after many days and varied experiences—when it is finally harvested. Jesus and the Apostles did the seed sowing, not only for their own day but for the whole wheat class developed throughout this age. And as Jesus explained in another parable, "The harvest is the end of the age." The gathering for the heavenly garner will be accomplished by the first resurrection.

LIKE A MUSTARD SEED

The different parables do not view the embryo kingdom from the same standpoint. It is because it may be viewed from such a variety of angles that so many parables are given us. Just so we might take various photographs of a building. One might show the eastern side, another the western, another the front elevation, another the floor-plan, and another show it with its scaffolding. Or, if a concrete building, the frame work might be pictured, inside of which the concrete is cast.

The parable of the mustard seed appears to represent the kingdom from the viewpoint of the world—as the nominal church, developed from the original little seed of the true Gospel. From that little seed we have a great institution today with many denominational branches. But alas! its thrifty development has invited into its branches the fowls of the air, which the Lord elsewhere describes as representing the wicked one and his angels—Satan and his representatives—who of course should have no place in the church; and they would have

no place in it if the church were loyal and zealous enough to proclaim only the true Gospel and the narrow way of self-denial.

Indeed, it is the neglect to preach this Gospel of the "narrow way" that has brought such prosperity to nominal Christianity and made it a desirable place for the fowls of the air—Satan and his deluded ones—to lodge in its branches, to be the real life of ecclesiasticism. This seems to be the same picture which the same Great Teacher gives us in Revelation 18:2. There we read that the nominal systems are represented symbolically as Babylon; and there we read, "She hath become the hold of every foul spirit and the cage of every unclean and hateful bird."

The word "cage" would seem to imply that these unclean birds are considered very desirable, and are held on to by nominal Christianity—probably because regarded as being amongst their best paying members and because of having the most attractions.

PARABLE OF THE LEAVEN

Throughout the Scriptures leaven is used as the symbol of sin. Thus when Jesus in his purity was to be symbolized as the "bread from heaven," the Jews were directed to use unleavened bread. Again, at their annual Passover season, the Jews were directed to cleanse their houses of leaven, to burn it up, to destroy it. Here again leaven was a symbol of sin, corruption. St. Paul, commenting on this, writes to the church, "Purge out, therefore, the old leaven [sin, malice, hatred, strife, etc.], that you may be a new lump"—that you may be, with Christ, the one unleavened loaf. It is of this loaf that he declares, "For we, being many, are one loaf, and one body; for we are all partakers of that one loaf."—1 Cor. 10:17.

It is true that in one of the official sacrifices bread was to be baked with leaven; but this, we believe, was for the very purpose of symbolizing or representing us, the church, and the fact that we were by nature sinners, children of wrath, even as others, and that the baking would arrest the corrupting influences of the leaven; and this baking represented symbolically the experiences through which the church must pass in order that sinful and corrupting tendencies might be completely destroyed in us.

In this parable our Lord represents a woman mixing leaven with a family baking of meal, with the result that the whole mass was leavened. Consequently, if any of the family desired pure, unleavened bread, it would be unobtainable, because the leaven pervaded the entire baking. What does this represent? We reply that in Scriptural symbolism a woman represents an ecclesiastical system. The woman in the parable represents a system organized and in power at an early date, and possessed of the pure meal—the pure food provided by the Lord for the household of faith.

The woman mixed leaven, error, false doctrine, with all the meal, with all the food supplied. Not a particle of it was left uncontaminated. The result has been indigestion. The Word of God, originally pure, is no longer accepted. The leaven, or fermentation, has spread so that today the entire mass of theological doctrine is putrid and offensive to all Christian people of all denominations.

The parable was a prophecy of what has occurred. It is time all true Christians were hearkening back from the creeds of the dark ages to the Words of Jesus, the apostles and the prophets. We are glad to note that "his Holiness, the Pope," is prominent amongst those who are pointing back again to the teachings of the Bible, as being the unadulterated Word of God, which alone "is able to make us wise unto salvation," and by which alone "the man of God may be thoroughly furnished unto every good work."——2 Tim. 3:15-17.

BEYOND THE VEIL

These stammering lips, that now
So vainly strive to speak thy praise—
Beyond the veil
Shall make the heaven of heavens resound
Through endless days.

These yearning eyes, that strain
To catch by faith a glimpse of thee—
Beyond the veil
Shall see thee as thou art through all
Eternity.

These trembling hands, these feet,
That seek to serve so earnestly—
Beyond the veil
Shall for thy kingdom's glorious work
Empowered be.

And this poor, throbbing heart,
That cannot now unfold its love—
Beyond the veil
Shall bloom and shower its fragrance through
The heaven above.

My soul, that neither seeks
Nor findeth here its perfect rest—
Beyond the veil
Shall in thy likeness wake and be
Forever blest!

GERTRUDE W. SEIBERT.

SOME INTERESTING QUESTIONS

RELATIVE TO ANSWERING A FOOL

Question.—Please explain: "Answer not a fool according to his folly, lest thou be like unto him. Answer a fool according to his folly, lest he be wise in his own conceit."—Prov. 26:4, 5.

Answer.—When talking to any one who speaks foolishly, do not talk foolishly in return. You dishonor yourself. In the second case: "Answer a fool according to his folly, lest he be wise in his own conceit," would signify that you do him a service if you show him the folly of his position, thereby kindly helping him to a proper attitude of mind.

ARCHANGEL SIGNIFIES HIGHEST ANGEL

Question.—Is there, or will there be more than one Archangel?

Answer.—To speak of Archangels (plural) would be contrary to the Scriptures. The word archangel signifies highest angel, the prefix arch meaning the same as chief; for instance, the chief of the fire department. In the twelfth chapter of Daniel we read (vs. 1), "And at that time shall Michael [the Archangel] stand up, the great Prince which standeth for the children of thy people." In the Hebrew the name Michael signifies One who as God, or like God. That One who is "like God," we understand to be the great Messiah, the Lord Jesus himself. "Michael will stand up"—that is, Messiah will stand up, "Who standeth for the children of thy people"—that is, he will stand up for Israel. But he will also stand up for the church, which is his body, and for all who are in harmony with God, and all who will be in harmony with God. This will include all mankind during the Millennial age. "In due time" they may be released from the bondage of corruption and death, and brought into full harmony with God.

RANSOM AND SIN-OFFERING

Question.—May we have a concise statement in which you differentiate between "ransom" and "sin-offering"?

Answer.—The word "ransom" signifies "corresponding price," and indicates one feature of the divine arrangement for man's recovery. As by a man sin entered into the world, so the recovery would be by a man's redemptive work.—1 Cor. 15:21, 22.

The term "Sin-Offering" is used to represent the modus operandi by which this ransom price will be used for the recovery of mankind. It shows the actual application of the ransom price on behalf of mankind in securing their release from condemnation and in permitting the glorious New Covenant arrangement to go into effect.

The ransom price has nothing whatever to do with the method by which that price will be applied. When our Lord Jesus died, he laid down a sufficient price, but the application of that price is not yet completed. The grand outcome of the redemptive work will be seen in the end of the Millennial age, when as a result of the application of the ransom price there will be Christ and the bride on the divine plane, the "great company" on the spirit plane, the "ancient worthies" in their perfected condition and the whole world of mankind restored to the perfection lost in Eden.

RE TERM "NEW CREATION"

Question.—Why is the term "new creation" applied to the church?

Answer.—The Scriptures tell us that our Lord was the beginning of the creation, the first-born of every creature, the first and the last; that the Heavenly Father never created any other being; and that by our Lord all things else were made. In other words, the Father's power was exercised through his Only Begotten Son. According to the Scriptures, man was the last of the creations in God's image. But the Heavenly Father has purposed the creation of an order of beings higher than any that has been made, and has arranged that his Only Begotten

Son shall be the one to occupy the highest position in that new creation.

"For the joy that was set before him" our Lord endured the cross, despised the shame, and then sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high. Originally, he was the first creation. Now he was the second creation—the new creation, in contradistinction. And the entire church has been invited to come up to this highest place, to be associated with Christ, to be partakers of the divine nature. But in order to attain to this high position, to be with him, they must become dead to the earthly nature and its interests, its aims and its projects, and alive with him beyond the veil. Jesus is the Head of this new creation, of which the church is the body. We do not understand that the "great company" will be a part of the new creation. Only the "little flock" will have the honor of being members of Christ's body.

Eventually, when the divine plan shall have reached its consummation, there will be Jehovah, the Head over all things and the Head over Christ; next will come our Lord and the church which is his body; then will come the various orders of angels, and lastly mankind. As the Apostle in his letter to the Ephesians tells us, "In the dispensation of the fulness of times, God will gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth, even in him."—Eph. 1:9, 10.

SIN-OFFERING AND SIN-ATONEMENT

Question.—What is the difference between sin-offering and sin-atonement?

Answer.—The term "sin-offering" relates to the presentation of something sacrificially, as an offering or sacrifice, on account of sin and on behalf of the sinner. It thus relates, not only to the work of the Lord Jesus in his own person during the work of his ministry of three and a half years, when he offered up himself, but also to him as the High Priest when he offers up the members of his body, during this Gospel age. The entire work is sacrificial; and since this offering is on account of sin, it is, therefore, a sin-offering. The sin-offering must be complete before the result can be applied.

When our Lord ascended up on high, he completed his own personal work; and on account of the merit which he possessed he was enabled to become the Advocate of the church—those who become the members of his prospective body. Since he intends to make application of that merit for the sins of the whole world, after he has offered in sacrifice the members of the church, he therefore delays the matter of the presentation of the sin-offering merit until the entire offering has been completed—until the church shall be with him in glory; for "if we suffer [with him] we shall also reign with him."—2 Tim. 2:12.

The expression "sin-atonement" may be used in respect to any part of the work of making satisfaction on account of sin. Strictly speaking, however, the term sin-atonement applies to the satisfaction of justice on behalf of mankind. Man has been condemned; justice executed a sentence, and in order that man may be released, justice must be satisfied.

Let us not in any sense of the word confound sin-atonement with sin. After sin has been atoned for, then the sinner will be given an opportunity to return to the original perfection in which Adam was created and from which he fell. The sin-atonement, therefore, will be completed when Christ shall have presented his merit on account of the entire world. But the results of sin will not be fully removed until the end of the thousand years of the reign of Messiah.

SOME INTERESTING LETTERS

"THE JOY OF THE LORD OUR STRENGTH"

Dear Pastor and Brother Russell:—

Please accept my hearty "Welcome Home." If I can guess by my own experience, I would think you are very happy to be home again, but O! so glad to have had the opportunity to take the glorious Gospel around the world. How happy and blessed must be your heart in the great work you have been chosen to accomplish in this grand harvest time! May our dear Heavenly Father give you strength and continued grace to finish it.

Dear Brother Russell, my own experiences on my trip to Europe were at times very interesting and brought great blessings to me. I can say in truth that I am glad I was able to go out there; but how happy I was when the time came to come back! I was away just three months.

I intended to send some little report to you on your trip, but thought you will get so much mail all the time that so many letters might bother you. I myself did not get any. Even though the children wrote, the letters never came.

I found very many hungry Christians in Germany who were glad to hear the good news. I spent many half nights telling the glad story. It was very strange to my relatives. Seven years ago I sent them each the three volumes, but not one of them had read, but had loaned them all. Some of the books traveled a long distance, to Munich, and were read by a Catholic priest, a Protestant minister and others. Some of them went to Colmar, and others were loaned and not returned. Strange to say, my friends were consecrated Christians and praying for more light all the time. When they heard that I was coming they hoped I would bring them some truth, and when they heard the glad tidings they accepted it. They seemed to me to be quite able to grasp the truth. My dear brother, who knew nothing but Catholicism, cried for joy. Five of my relatives have now accepted the truth.

And now, praying that grace and peace may be multiplied unto you, I remain,

Your sister in Christ,

F. Muntzer.

Beloved Brother Russell:—

After our enjoyable visit to Brooklyn, Sister Thorn and I returned home more than ever encouraged to take up the cross daily and follow our Master faithfully, unto death.

We especially enjoyed being at "Bethel" and the privilege of sitting at your table, listening to the helpful discussions and table-talks. Our interview with you in your study was also very helpful and drew us nearer to you. It was truly a "holy week" to us.

Last Sunday, at the close of the afternoon service at Lynn, I told the friends of our intention to re-unite with the Boston Class, I. B. S. A. At the conclusion of my remarks prayer was offered and we sang, "Blest be the tie," etc. We believe we left with the good will of the entire class.

We then proceeded to Boston, arriving there in time for the evening meeting. After a few testimonies had been given I gave mine, reminding the friends that if we had any differences to settle with one another—not hereafter, but right here, these things must be adjusted.

I then confessed having made some unintentional mistakes which I feared had caused them unnecessary pain, and that I was truly repentant and asked their forgiveness, also requesting that we might have closer fellowship with the dear Boston class.

We were assured of their forgiveness, and after several had expressed their joy in hearing our words (for I assured them that I spoke for Sister Thorn as well as for myself), the whole class by a rising vote expressed their love and a hearty welcome.

Both at Lynn and at Boston it was a heart-mellowing time—a most blessed day to us all. Many tears of joy were shed as the dear friends shook hands with us. We feel sure that you, too, will rejoice with us. Kindly remember us both in your prayers.

With much Christian love from Sister Thorn and myself, I am as ever,

Your brother and fellow-servant in Christ,

Walter J. Thorn.—Mass.

PASTOR RUSSELL'S FOREIGN ITINERARY

Liverpool, England	July	23
Oldham, "	"	24
Carlisle, "	"	25
Glasgow, Scotland	"	26-28
Aberdeen, "	"	29
Kirkcaldy, "	"	30
New Castle on Tyne, England	"	31
Leeds, England	Aug.	1
Coventry, "	"	2
London, "	"	3, 4
——— France	"	6
——— France	Aug.	7
——— "	"	8
——— "	"	9
Paris, "	"	11
Geneva, Switzerland	"	12
Mülhausen, Germany	"	13
Basle, Switzerland	"	14
Zürich, "	"	15
St. Gallen, "	"	16
Berlin, Germany	"	18
Dresden, "	"	19

HOW ST. PETER WAS PUNISHED FOR DENYING HIS LORD

"Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these?"—John 21:15-17.

The context shows that these words were addressed by the Redeemer to St. Peter on the occasion of his third manifestation to his disciples after his resurrection. This was presumably three or four weeks after the Master's resurrection from the dead. His manifestations to the women on the morning of his resurrection and his later manifestations to the two as they went to Emmaus are evidently not counted, but the manifestation the same evening in the upper room, when all the disciples except Thomas and Judas were present, is counted the first. And the manifestations a week later, Thomas being present, is counted the second.

The delay in giving this third manifestation was evidently for the purpose of testing the faith of the Apostles and of leading them to reach a conclusion respecting their future course, which Jesus wished to correct. So far as we can understand the record at least two Sundays passed without any further manifestation of Jesus to his disciples, and then, giving up hope, they decided to return to the fishing business and did so. The journey to Galilee and the resumption of business presumably took another week.

During all those thirty days the mental attitude of all the apostles and the other disciples can be better imagined than described. They were perplexed, they had indeed had evidences of the Master's resurrection; they had had the Scriptures called to their attention which proved that this was necessary, and that God had previously so arranged. They had hoped for further conferences with Jesus and that he would have told them definitely what to do.

Instead, left to themselves, the disciples were thoroughly disheartened. They had left all to follow him, to tell the people that he was the Son of God, the long-promised Messiah, and that he would soon set up his kingdom, which would bring blessings, primarily to Israel and, secondary, through Israel, to all the families of the earth in harmony with the Abrahamic Covenant. Now apparently all of these hopes were dashed, frustrated. How foolish they thought it would seem for them to try to convince the people that a man, crucified as a malefactor, as a blasphemer, was indeed the Messiah! How foolish it would seem to tell of his resurrection! They felt that they could do nothing else than abandon the ministry as a lost cause; and the resumption of the fishing business was the logical conclusion.

THEY TOILED ALL THE NIGHT

Their first night was a discouraging one—they caught nothing. It looked indeed as though God was punishing them for the course they had taken in becoming disciples of Jesus—that everything was going wrong. But not so; they were merely being taught needed lessons.

In the morning they beheld a stranger on the shore who beckoned and shouted to know if they had any fish for sale. They replied, No, they had made no catch. The stranger suggested casting the net on the other side of the boat. And, although the suggestion seemed a foolish one, having been so unsuccessful, yet they did so, and immediately the net was filled with fishes! It did not require long for them to learn the lesson. They knew instinctively that the unknown stranger upon the shore was none other than their Master. They remembered a very similar experience at the time they were first called to leave their nets and to become fishers of men.

All interest had just centered in the fishing business, but now boats and fish and nets all lost their value in the estimation of these fishermen. Here was their risen Lord, for whose third appearance they had been waiting now nearly three weeks. Fearing that the Master would disappear, even before he could get to him, St. Peter plunged into the sea and swam ashore. To his surprise the stranger already had fish and had them cooked, and all were invited to join in the breakfast on the shore of Galilee.

The stranger had not the clothing by which they had known their Lord, neither did he have the marks of the nails in his hands and feet, that they might thus identify him. This was a different manifestation. They knew him as did those with whom he walked to Emmaus, who recognized him in the blessing of the bread, and not by his features or clothing or wounds. They recognized that none other than he could have performed such a miracle. They did not ask who he was; they felt a restraint; as we read, "None of them durst ask who he was," but all knew that he was the Lord.

"LOVEST THOU ME MORE?"

The stranger addressed St. Peter particularly, saying, "Lovest thou me more than these"—these boats and nets, etc., pertaining to the fishing business? St. Peter answered, "Lord, Thou knowest that I affectionately love thee." He used a word expressing fondness of love. Jesus replied, "Feed my lambs."

Then came the question a second time, "Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me?" A great pressure was felt by St. Peter. Why did the Master so particularly question his love. Why did he put this question more to him than to the others? Was it because he had been the first of the disciples to suggest the resumption of the fishing business? Was he to blame for this? But he answered, "Lord, thou knowest that I affectionately love thee." Jesus this time replied, "Tend my sheep." For the third time Jesus said to St. Peter, "Simon, son of Jonas, dost thou affectionately love me?" Here Jesus used the same word that St. Peter had used, as though he questioned the affection and depth of St. Peter's love. Ah! the third time must have sent the memory of St. Peter back to the scene in Caiaphas' Judgment Hall, when he denied his Master the third time, even with cursing. And now Jesus for the third time had asked him respecting his love and whether it was really a love of affection! St. Peter's choking reply was, "Lord, thou knowest all things! Thou knowest that I affectionately love thee!" The Lord's reply was, "Feed my sheep."

In harmony with these words of the Master to St. Peter the chief work of his followers has been to minister to the needs of the spirit-begotten sheep. It is in full harmony with this that St. Paul, addressing the elders of Ephesus, counseled that they "feed the flock of God, which he had purchased with the blood of his own Son." There is a point here that perhaps is too frequently overlooked. If all of the Lord's followers could realize that the message to St. Peter is the same as comes to all of us, perhaps it would make a change in most of our preaching.

OUR MISTAKEN METHODS

Have not Christians in general overlooked this important lesson, namely, that the chief work of the ministers and under-shepherds of the Lord's flock during this age is to "feed the flock"? Is it not true that comparatively little feeding is being done? On the contrary, the thought usually received by new converts is, Now you are saved; go, evangelize, and bring others to Christ—especially bring money, for with plenty of it we can convert the world. Work for Jesus by soliciting funds for church expenses, extension, etc., etc.

If the inquirer has thoughts or feelings is it not too often the case that his instructors know not how to answer them, but merely say, "Stop thinking, and go to work"? Alas, that this is so true! The "lambs" should be fed until they become "sheep." The sheep should be tended, cared for, guided, instructed, and the sheep should also be fed with the stronger meat than that which the lambs could appropriate. St. Paul gives this thought when on one occasion he urges his hearers to desire "the sincere milk of the Word that they may grow thereby."

But few seem to copy the great St. Paul in respect to their methods. Few seem to realize and apply to themselves the Master's words to St. Peter, "Feed my lambs," and "my sheep." As a consequence, the church of Christ is in a languishing condition. Many, sincere at heart, know not what they believe. Many would find it impossible to follow St. Peter's admonition, "Be ready to give a reason for the hope that is within you, with meekness and reverence."—1 Peter 3:15.

REASONS FOR THE NEGLECT OF THE DOCTRINES OF CHRIST

There are two reasons which have led up to the neglect of "the doctrines of Christ"—the teachings of the Bible. These two reasons fully explain why so many are telling new believers, Never mind the doctrines of Christ, but go out and convert somebody.

The first of these reasons is the erroneous thought which gained ascendency during the dark ages, namely, that from Pentecost until the second coming of Jesus is the time allotted by the Heavenly Father for the world's conversion, and that this is the commission which he gives to his people, and if the world be not converted the responsibility for their eternal torture will fall upon his people.

All of this is a mistake. Not a word of Scripture tells that the church was commissioned to convert the world before the second coming of the Lord. Quite to the contrary, the Scriptures show that at the Lord's second coming the world will be unconverted. The Apocalypse particularly tells us that when the Lord at his second coming shall establish

his kingdom, the nations will be angry and divine wrath will come upon them, thereby introducing the great "time of trouble" with which this age is to end, according to the prophetic Word.

These testimonials do not signify that holiness will perish, nor that all of the Lord's people will be unfaithful, but they do signify that the world in general will not be the Lord's people; they will still be enemies, Gentiles, unconverted. Nor are we urging that the church has nothing whatever to do with the world. Quite to the contrary; while she has not been given the mission of converting the world in the present age—while that work remains for her to do in the coming age in connection with the Lord and his kingdom—nevertheless she was commissioned to do a work of witnessing in the present age.

The church's witness was to be the telling of the message of God's grace to those having an ear to hear, although they be but few. Secondarily, she was to witness to the world by her faithfulness to the principles of righteousness, and thus to show forth the praises of him who called her "out of darkness into his marvelous light." But this witnessing was not in order to the converting of the world, but in order to gather out of the world the number necessary to complete the divinely foreordained elect bride of Christ.

THE SECOND REASON

As the first error was in respect to the world's conversion to the Lord, the second error was in respect to what would happen to the world if they were not converted to the Lord. When the erroneous idea gained credence that everyone who does not accept the invitation and become a member of the bride of Christ is to be eternally tormented, can we wonder that it led many good people to a frenzy of error respecting what should be done to save their families and neighbors and the heathen millions from a supposed eternity of torture?

It was because of this supposed agency that those coming to the belief in Jesus were exhorted not to stop to feed and grow strong in the Lord and to study his Word, but to be moved by a frenzy of zeal to bring others to the Lord. This frenzy in turn led to most unreasonable teachings and practices, which we are only now gradually getting rid of as we realize that a great mistake was made.

How strange that we did not stop to think of the absurdity of our position and how it misrepresented the Heavenly Father, in a most detestable light! How strange that any should ever think that when the Heavenly Father sent out the call to those who have the hearing ear, to joint-heirship with Jesus Christ their Lord, he would consign to eternal torment any who would decline to accept the admittedly stringent rules and conditions appertaining to this "call"—the "narrow way" of the footsteps of Jesus—self-denial, etc.

Well do the Scriptures assure us that the saints "wrestle not with flesh and blood merely," but rather "with wicked spirits in high positions' of influence. (Eph. 6:12.) Well does the Apostle tell us that it is the god of this age who hath blinded the minds of those who believe not; that he is preventing the light from shining unto them. (2 Cor. 4:4.) Well can we see how he put light for darkness and darkness for light during the dark ages.

ANOTHER LESSON WE MAY LEARN

We must not leave the text without calling to memory a most wonderfully instructive lesson concerning the proper way to reprove and rebuke our brethren when the same is surely necessary. So far as the record shows, the three inquiries which our Lord made of St. Peter respecting his love for him were the only rebukes ever given him as an offset, or punishment for his shameful denial of the Master on the night in which he was betrayed.

Had many of us been in the Master's place we would have felt that it was necessary to make St. Peter very humbly apologize before we would have anything further to do with him. We would have been inclined to speak of his weakness, of his ingratitude, of how he knew better, etc., etc. Our sense of justice would, in many instances, have entirely overshadowed our sense of mercy and sympathy. But not so with the Master. He knew the loyalty of St. Peter's heart. He knew that he had already gone out and wept bitterly over the matter. He knew what a sense of shame would be upon him and how much courage it would mean for him to think at all of meeting the Master whom he had denied.

Surely it was on account of his sympathy for St. Peter and this appreciation of the tendency he would have to become entirely discouraged that led our Lord to mention St. Peter first amongst the Apostles on the morning of his resurrection, saying to Mary, to whom he first appeared, "Go and tell my disciples, and Peter"—don't let Peter think that he is an outcast. Let him know that I think of him and love him and sympathize with him and have forgiven him, because I knew he did it under stress.

WE SHOULD COPY THE MASTER'S METHODS

And if our Lord and Master has set us such an example of benevolence and forgiveness without request, how are we learning this lesson? To what extent do we forgive others their trespasses and to what extent do we go more than half way to let them know that we harbor no resentful feelings toward them? To what extent do we send word that we think of them kindly, generously? And when the appropriate time comes and it is proper for something to be said can we not take a lesson from the Redeemer's loving forbearance and gentleness in his merely asking the erring one if he had a proper kind of love, and when he confesses special love, then to ask him if he is sure that he has the special love?

No doubt our success as the Master's servants in feeding the brethren, the flock, and helping instead of hindering them, will be in proportion as we remember and copy his style and methods. So, then, while feeding his flock, let us have continually before us the great Shepherd's example of how the flock should be dealt with.

"I COME TO DO THY WILL"

"Then said he, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God. He taketh away the first that he may establish the second. By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ, once for all." "A body hast thou prepared me."—Heb. 10:9, 10, 5.

In the context from which our text is taken the Apostle speaks of the "better sacrifices"—plural—and the "one offering"—singular. From his statement we feel justified in saying that St. Paul is contrasting the antitypical Day of Atonement with the typical Atonement day, on which was made one sin-offering on behalf of all the people, but consisting of two sacrifices—first, the bullock for the priestly tribe of Levi, and then the goat for the other tribes of Israel.

In those offerings which were made year by year continually, God had taken no pleasure, for they did not satisfy or please him in making satisfaction for sin. They were not the divine expression of what was pleasing to God in the fullest sense. "A body hast thou prepared me" "for the suffering of death." This " body" was the human body of Jesus, which, through immaculate conception, was holy, innocent, undefiled, separate from sinners and, therefore, capable of being the ransom-price for the sins of the whole world. But it is also true that God has provided a larger body.

"JESUS, WHOM THOU PERSECUTEST"

This larger body that God has provided is composed of human beings, whom he drew and called to be members of this body of Christ, which is the church. This drawing and calling was to the natural man and not to the new creature. When Jesus accepted these members of his body he accepted them as new creatures. The invitation to them was before they became new creatures. When, therefore, he accepted those whom the Father drew and called, he accepted them as members, or representatives, so that they might be his representatives throughout this age. From this standpoint he spoke when upbraiding Saul of Tarsus, saying, "Saul Saul, why persecutest thou me?" (Acts 9:4) So Jesus in the flesh (represented by his followers) was still in the world long after Jesus, as the Head of the church, had ascended up on high. Thus we see that the sufferings of the church all down the age have, in this sense, been the sufferings of Jesus.

The Apostle speaks of himself as "always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus." (2 Cor. 4:10.) All of the followers of the Lord Jesus bear about in their body the dying of the Lord Jesus. As Jesus had experiences in sufferings, so have all of his disciples experience with him in the suffering of this time, and communion with him in spirit. "Though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day."—2 Cor. 4:16.

OBEDIENCE TO THE EXTENT OF SACRIFICE

We refer to our text again, "Lo, I come to do thy will, O God"—everything written in the Book. Because born under the Law, Jesus was obligated to keep the law. There was no sacrifice in keeping the law. To do whatever is commanded is not sacrifice, but obedience. The law did not say that one should love his neighbor better than himself. But Jesus went beyond this law of justice and laid down his life in behalf of the church and of the world. Because he was thus obedient to the Father to the extent of keeping, not only everything in the law, but everything written in the Book, in the Bible—on this account he was a sacrifice, and was afterward raised up to the divine Majesty on high.

The things written in the Book were written in types and shadows, in allegories. To illustrate: Moses lifted up the brazen serpent. This is a picture illustrating how our Lord Jesus would be lifted up. The lamb slain at the Passover season is also a type of Jesus, the slain Lamb. The Day of Atonement sacrifices are also pictures. And as the Lamb was led to the slaughter, so he did not resist.

"THE HEAVENS WERE OPENED"

We are not informed how much our Lord knew, at the time of his consecration, respecting the divine purpose. In his boyhood days our Lord knew that he had come into the world to do the will of the Father. But just what that will was he did not fully know. It was all written in the Book, but the Book was sealed; and until that will was revealed it could not be comprehended. He could not know until after he had received the holy Spirit; and his consecration must be made before he could receive that holy Spirit. Hence at the time he offered himself at baptism he could not understand the "deep things." As St. Paul says, no natural man can perceive the things of God: "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him; neither can be know them, because they are spiritually discerned." (1 Cor. 2:14.) Jesus could not know the depths and importance of all the symbols which God had written in that very form for the special purpose of keeping them secret, until he had been begotten of the Spirit.

We understand that our Lord was the slain Lamb in the divine purpose just as soon as he consecrated his life at Jordan and had bestowed upon him the begetting of the holy spirit. We read that immediately after he had gone up out of the water the heavenly things were opened unto him. Under the influence of that enlightenment he went into the wilderness and remained there fasting for forty days, that he might understand the will of God. But his consecration was to fulfill everything written in the Book. He was to be the great Messiah, the great Mediator between God and men. He made the full consecration of his life to this end. That consecration was accepted. It meant the fulfillment of all the details of the whole plan.

CONSECRATION MUST PRECEDE UNDERSTANDING OF TYPES

As before suggested, all these things written in the Book concerning our Lord were not understood by him until the due time, which began when the holy Spirit came to him. Then, while he was in the wilderness, he began to see and to apply the variouse lessons to himself. He had contracted to do everything written in the Book before he understood the meaning of these types. Evidently this was the divine intention and there was a reason behind it.

Here was God's will, not written in commands, but in types and shadows, that the one who was to fulfill these things might see in them, not a divine command, but the divine will. "Lo, I come to do thy will!" I am ready to do thy will at any cost! Now the Apostle says that when our Lord thus came and presented himself to God, "He taketh away the first (that is, he setteth aside the type), that he might establish the second," the antitype. The type was the serpent lifted up; the antitype was himself "lifted up." The type was the lamb slain; the antitype was himself slain. The type was the sacrifice of the Day of Atonement; himself and the adopted body, the church, constitute the "better sacrifices."

After his return from the wilderness, our Lord began the work of taking away the first (the types). Part of the work was completed in the three years and a half of his earthly ministry. But the work is not yet finished. Coming down to our time, the Apostle says, "By the which will we are sanctified." (Heb. 10:10.) What will is this? The same will that our Lord had. He said, "I come to do thy will"—not merely thy law. Now we who are the church say that we are glad to follow him. We are glad to be living sacrifices. God does not command us to be sacrifices.

THE CHURCH SET APART FOR SERVICE

The Apostle says, "I beseech you, brethren"—I put before you the fact that it is well worthy of your attention to present yourselves living sacrifices. Thus, by having the same will, the same mind, this same disposition that is in Christ, we are sanctified, we are set apart. We do not set ourselves apart. The Lord Jesus sets us apart. He it is who imputes to us his merit in order that the Father may accept the sacrifice and beget us to the new nature as members of his body. The Apostle says, "By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all" (for all being supplied). (Heb. 10:10) What does this signify? We answer that the statement is true. The literal body of Jesus was the basis of our acceptance with God. The church is the mystical body of Jesus: "Why persecutest thou me?" "I am Jesus whom thou persecutest."

The offering of this body of Jesus has progressed throughout the eighteen hundred years; and it is only as we are offered and only by being offered that we can become members and attain to joint-heirship with our Lord in the kingdom—"So many of us as were baptized into Christ." (Rom. 6:3) We are not merely baptized into the glorious body of the future, the Messiah, but we are baptized into Jesus that we might share in the death of Jesus, the sacrifice, and share in the glory of Jesus, the Messiah.

THE BLOOD OF BULLS AND GOATS CAN NEVER TAKE AWAY SINS

"And every priest standeth daily ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacrifice, which can never take away sins." (Heb. 10:11) This refers to the fact that the Jewish priest offered the sacrifice continually and yet never accomplished anything with it. "But this Man, when he offered one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down at the right hand of God." (Heb. 10:12) "This Man" is the glorious High Priest, Jesus, the Head, who, after he had offered one sacrifice for sin forever, sat down at the right hand of God.

But his offering was in two parts; the first of which was at Jordan, when he offered up himself; and the second was at Pentecost, when he "appeared in the presence of God for us"—for us living today, as well as for those living then. At this time he accepted the church as joint-sacrificers and offered them; and in offering them he offered the one antitypical goat. So his offerings were really completed at the time of Pentecost. What is he waiting for? The Scriptures say he has sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, waiting for the time to come when his enemies shall be made his footstool.—Heb. 10:13.

Meantime his bride shall have been perfected and joined with him in glory. When that time shall have come, his enemies shall be made his footstool. At the time of his death, we remember, he said, "I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me; for they are thine, and all mine are thine." (John 17:9, 10) And the promise of the Father to him is, "Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession."—Psa. 2:8.

The Apostle says that he sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high waiting until God would make his enemies his footstool. God is not prepared to give him these things until the church is completed. In other words, the church is not a supplemental and additional part of the divine plan. This has been the "mystery hid from ages and generations."—Col. 1:26.

THE MYSTERY UNFOLDING NOW

Now, under the revelation of God, we see the unfolding of the mystery, that the church are to be fellow-heirs with our Lord in the glories of the kingdom. Hence, it is the divine purpose for Jesus to wait until the time shall come when the church will have been perfected. This matter of sacrifice is all to be completed during the Gospel age; and this one great Day of Atonement will also be completed. There will be no repetition of the sacrifice.

We remember that in Revelation 5 it is stated that no one was found worthy to open the scroll written within and on the back, and sealed with seven seals; not a soul was worthy. No; "No man in heaven, nor in earth, neither under the earth, was able to open the Book, neither to look thereon." Jehovah had already said to Abraham that he would bless the world, but had not revealed how it was to be done. Then we read that John wept, because God had a great plan, and because no one was to be the recipient of that plan, to reveal it. The angel said, "Weep not; behold, the Lion of the Tribe of Judah, the Root of David, hath prevailed to open the Book, and to loose the seven seals

thereof." (Rev. 5:1-6) By this we understand that he was not born with this right, but that he acquired it—he "hath prevailed to open the Book." Therefore, on account of his obedience, God also highly exalted him, giving him dignity, power and honor.

The Lion of the Tribe of Judah was our Lord Jesus, to whom the Book was delivered. It is not due for any believers to understand any of the deep things written in that Book until they have come to the place of consecration. But God does not reveal them to us by his Spirit in the same manner as he revealed them to the Lord Jesus. John said that this is the "Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to show unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass; and he sent and signified it by his angel unto his servant John." "All things are of the Father, and all things are by the Son, and we by him."—Rev. 1:1; 1 Cor. 8:6.

"LIGHT SHINING MORE AND MORE UNTO THE PERFECT DAY"

It would not be becoming on our part to speak with positiveness of how much our Lord knew during his earthly ministry. For how could we know except as it was declared? He said that the times and the seasons were not at that time known by any but "the Father only." We cannot doubt that he knows all on that subject now. And if our surmises are correct, we know more on that subject now than our Lord did then.

Doubtless it would be impossible to understand many of the deep things pertaining to the Messianic age long in advance of that period. Daniel tells us that the prophecies relating to the time of the end were closed up, sealed until the end. (Dan. 12:4, 9) As these things became due to be understood they constituted meat in due season for the household of faith. (Matt. 24:45) For instance, it would be meat in due season in Noah's time to know about the flood; but that information would not be meat in due season today.

So then we are to walk in the light and be guided by the Lord's Word. "For prophecy came not in old time by the will of man; but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the holy Spirit," St. Peter tells us. Again St. Paul says, "These things . . . were written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world [ages] are come." (2 Peter 1:21; 1 Cor. 10:11; John 16:7, 13) And our Lord said of the holy Spirit which he would send, that it would "show us things to come." (John 16:7, 13) Thus the pathway of the church all the way down has been one of increasing light.

Our faith does not consist merely in believing in God's personality, God's righteousness. We fully believe in the personality of God, in the power of God. Nevertheless we need to exercise faith in the divine providence in our own case; faith in the fact that God veils things from our mental and spiritual sight at the present time. He allowed things to come to Jesus which might have astonished our Lord if he had not exercised faith. He allowed our Lord to be maligned, slandered—to be crucified. It requires knowledge, faith, for everything that we are called upon to do and to undergo. We believe God; but, are we determined to be loyal to God and to his plan? And are we willing to endure hardship and to sacrifice earthly interests in favor of these heavenly promises?

"DELIVERED FOR THE DESTRUCTION OF THE FLESH"

During the Gospel age there has been but one condition upon which any may come to the Father. The Lord does not propose many ways, but only one way. "Strait is the gate and narrow is the way that leadeth unto life"—now. But when the kingdom comes there will be a highway, a more favorable, an easier way, as the Lord states through the Prophet Isaiah. In it there will be no stumbling-stones; it will not be narrow and difficult, but comparatively easy; and throughout Messiah's reign of a thousand years, it will be the way by which the Adamic race may return to God. During that reign the whole world will be assisted, succored and disciplined, that they may be encouraged to go to the very end of the way.

In the present time, the only way is dark, narrow, difficult; the light has not yet begun to shine for the world. The Scriptures represent the church of Christ is this Gospel age as saying, "Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet." In olden times men had little lanterns which they attached to the toes of their sandals, and as they walked each step would be in the light. So the Lord has been dealing with the church during the Gospel age. The narrow way has been dark; but we have had the "sure word of prophecy," which, as a lamp, shines on the pathway and will shine "more and more unto the perfect day."

When that day comes men will not need the lamp; for then there will be sunlight. Then the knowledge of God will fill the whole earth.

SACRIFICE ESSENTIAL TO DISCIPLESHIP

One of the narrowing features of this way is that at the present time no one is accepted of God unless he makes a definite covenant with God. If he does not choose to make that covenant he may think he is a Christian, but he is not. In the world today four hundred million people are counted as Christians. Many have the idea that if they join the church or do some good deed, they thus become followers of Christ. But the Bible very plainly states: "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, take up his cross, and follow me." (Matt. 16:24) This self-denial and cross-bearing is the sacrifice necessary to discipleship in Christ at the present time.

Many people are not Christians because they have not entered into a covenant with God. The Lord speaks of the class now called to discipleship, saying, "Gather my saints together unto me; those that have made a covenant with me by sacrifice"—by a complete consecration of themselves; "Present your bodies living sacrifices, holy and acceptable unto God, your reasonable service." (Psa. 50:5; Rom. 12:1) If we have been accepted in Christ, if we have been begotten of the holy Spirit, it is because we have entered at this strait gate and upon this narrow way, and have made this covenant of sacrifice to the Lord, giving our wills and all earthly rights to him, that his will may be done in us.

After having entered this strait gate and narrow way, we should continue therein—not necessarily without stumbling, not necessarily without making mistakes; if we can go on ever so falteringly, to the best of our ability and with hearts loyal to the Lord, we shall be granted to sit on his throne—members of his bride class.

THE CARES OF THE WORLD OVERCOME MANY

As we are all aware the Bible shows that some who make this consecration, afterward become involved with the world, the cares of this life, and the deceitfulness of riches. These fail to carry out their agreement. Thus they are holding back the very price necessary to make them joint-heirs with our Lord. Whoever rejects the cross will not get the crown. How many people are overcharged with the cares of this life! How many people are being deluded by the deceitfulness of riches!

There was a gentleman with whom the writer was once very intimate; we were like brothers. One day he said, "Brother Russell, I should like very much indeed to be out in the Lord's work and to do some kind of service for the truth, but I have a wife, and I understand that the Lord holds me responsible for the care of my wife. I could not think of going out and leaving her dependent. But if the Lord in his providence should ever send me money so that I could go without my wife's suffering any serious inconvenience, I would be very glad to go out and preach the Gospel." The Lord took him at his word. He was then a bookkeeper; but the Lord opened the way, by the death of a member of the firm, for him to become one of the principal partners in that firm. Without any effort at all he prospered financially until he was worth at least half a million dollars.

One day we said to him, "Brother, we have a very serious matter that weighs on us a great deal." He said, "Tell me what it is and I will assist you, whatever it costs." You see how gracious he was! He thought that we were after his money! Dear friends, we thank God that we have never yet found it necessary to ask for money; and we do not suppose that we ever shall. We said, "Brother, we are in great distress, and no one but you can help us." "Tell me what it is," he replied. We said, "Dear Brother, we desire to call your attention to something which you said several years ago when you were poor." Then we recited our previous conversation as best we could, and said, "The Lord has given you the money; He has done his part; are you ready to do yours?" With streaming eyes he answered, "Brother Russell, I am so bound to my business—hand and foot—that it would be impossible now." The cares of this life, the deceitfulness of riches, according to his own words, had bound

him both hand and foot; but his heart was still loyal to God.

We have no desire to be his judge, but we are inclined to think that dear brother did not get into the kingdom. While we do not know, yet we fear that his being bound "hand and foot" may have stood in his way, though we think that he was truly a child of God. Are we to suppose that because he failed to make that sacrifice which he had agreed to make, he would go down into the second death? We hardly think so. We think that the Lord loved him and that he had a very loyal character. The Lord loves good characters. Our thought is that quite probably the dear fellow will be in the great company; and we are very glad that there will be a great company class.

OUR HUMANITY MUST DIE

No one will get into the Little Flock class but those who faithfully lay down their lives in sacrifice to the end of the journey. God foreknew and predestinated that all who are of that class must be copies of his dear Son. If one is not a full copy of our Lord Jesus, if one has not left all to follow him, then that one will not be of the bride class.

The Scriptures mention two classes—the one as a little flock and the other as a great company—both parts of the "church of the first-borns." In the type the priests were members of the tribe of Levi; but there were others of that tribe who were not priests. The Levites as a whole represent, we understand, the church of the first-born ones who will attain the spirit plane of being, but who will form two classes, a "little flock" or priest class, and a "great company" or Levite class.

The voluntary sacrificing of the flesh is for one to give himself of his own free will to the Lord and to submit himself to the Lord Jesus as the great High Priest to carry out for him the work of sacrifice. What of those who make this arrangement and then fail to make the sacrifice? Their earthly life is consecrated; God has given them the holy Spirit of adoption, and has accepted the arrangement whereby they gave up all their earthly rights. Such can never get the world's salvation. They voluntarily gave up all right to life on the human plane. When God gave them the holy Spirit, He accepted the contract, binding on both sides. They will get the heavenly nature or nothing.

"DELIVERED OVER TO SATAN"

Those who do not go on to give themselves fully in sacrifice are delivered over to the adversary to buffet them until their flesh shall be destroyed—until these earthly, clinging tendencies which were holding them from full loyalty to God are broken down and their minds become fully submissive and in harmony with God. That which they refused to give voluntarily will be taken away from them.

The only knowledge we have of this matter is from the Apostle's words. St. Paul, addressing the church at Corinth, said that they had amongst them a brother who was not living according to his covenant, but who was living in a measure of sin. The Apostle reprimanded the church for not having done their duty by the brother. Then said he, "I verily, as absent in body, but present in spirit, have judged already, as though I were present, concerning him that hath so done this deed . . . to deliver such a one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus." (1 Cor. 5:3, 5) If the flesh is not destroyed, the spirit will not be saved, is the Apostle's argument.

This statement gives us an inkling of the Lord's will. In every case it is necessary that the flesh be destroyed. If the will is overcome by the flesh, the result will be the death of the will also; that is, the second death. But if the will desires to be in harmony with the Lord, then, although the enforced destruction of the flesh is not sacrifice, and such are not counted in with the sacrificers, yet they are saved "so as by fire" on the spirit plane, in the day of the Lord Jesus.—1 Cor. 3:15.

Regarding the case that we have mentioned earlier in this article you might ask, Did that Brother lose the knowledge of the truth? We will tell you; for this is a very interesting question.

In this Brother's case we do not know what were the sentiments of his heart, of course, for we are not able to judge those. But he left us and joined the Presbyterian church. Then he joined the Christian Alliance people and tried to believe in faith-healing and to practice it, although he had possessed such knowledge of the truth along these lines. After pressing along the line of faith-healing, etc., he had several attacks of sickness and had to call in a doctor, notwithstanding faith-cures. Finally, after very serious illness lasting a number of weeks, he passed away. We do not know enough about him to say to what extent his mind was turned toward the Lord. We had no opportunity of knowing, for his attitude had more or less cut us off from our previous intimate fellowship.

Another case was called to our attention by a brother who asked us this very question—"Do you think this to be a case of what we might call 'the destruction of the flesh'?" It seemed to us that it was such a case. We cite it:

A brother living in a certain city received the truth and rejoiced in it greatly. He found another brother, with whom he liked to meet and talk about the glad message. He seemed to show the right spirit, just ready for the truth, and it was satisfying to his heart. But his wife was very indignant. She opposed him saying, "Choose between your religion and me; you cannot have both." She put the matter very squarely before him; and he chose his wife. It was only a little while afterwards, as the story came to us, that apparently the Lord put the poor brother where he was very sorry for his choice. He contracted some kind of loathsome disease, and in the midst of his terrible suffering his wife deserted him.

We hope that the Lord did not desert him and that eventually he was forgiven by the Lord; for it looked as if the Lord had taken that brother at his own proposition; that he was really a child of God, but not of the overcoming class. He loved his wife more than the Lord and was not worthy to be a member of the bride class. So apparently he suffered such entire destruction of the flesh as he probably never expected to know. He must have loved his wife a great deal to give the Lord up for her.

Yet she deserted him at a time of great need! Even from the standpoint of the world it would seem wrong for a wife to leave her husband under those conditions. We may readily suppose that the brother came back to the Lord at the closing hours, learning his lesson well, and perhaps making certain promises to the Lord. If so we doubt not that his spirit will be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.

"CONTEND FOR THE FAITH"

"Ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints."—Jude 3.

The contention which the Scriptures reprobate is that of selfishness—contending for place, for power, for our friends against some one else's friends, for our ideas against those of others. And the implication is given that those who are thus contentious will never enter into the kingdom; for this contentious spirit indicates a wrong attitude or condition.

It is one thing, however, to be inveigled into something or to be overtaken in a fault, and quite another thing to contend along selfish lines. Amongst the Lord's people, even in the Apostles' day, there was a tendency at times to fight each other rather than to fight the devil and the spirit of the world and the weaknesses within themselves. The organs of destructiveness and combativeness, which would serve a Christian soldier in good stead if directed against his own weaknesses and blemishes, are sadly out of place when, ignoring his own weaknesses, he merely becomes contentious with the brethren—often over nothing or over questions whose importance he exaggerates, because of his contentious spirit. Such should remember the Scriptural statement that "he that ruleth his spirit is greater than he that taketh a city."—Prov. 16:32.

The Apostle Paul reprehends that misdirection of Christian energy which "bites and devours" one another and warns against it as tending to the destruction of all that is spiritual amongst the Lord's people. Not that the Apostle favored slackness as respects the important principles of divine revelation, for he showed always his determination to contend for righteousness; as one instance of this we recall his own words regarding his rebuke of one of the other apostles, older in the Christian faith than himself—"I withstood him to the face, because he was to be blamed."

COMMENDABLE CONTENTION

But while all of the Lord's people should be on guard against the spirit of contention, watching closely lest anything be done in a biting and devouring manner, instead of manifesting patience and long suffering, brotherly-kindness, love, yet they have enlisted as new creatures, spirit-begotten, to

walk after the Spirit, and they must continually recognize this fact and keep watch that they are always walking in line with the spirit of the truth; and our text tells us of a contention which is not only proper, but necessary for all who are walking in this way. They are to "earnestly contend for the faith"—for the Word of God, for the promises which God has made, for the good things for which God has arranged.

The necessity for this course lies in the fact that this world is no friend to grace; no friend, therefore, to the people of God. Selfishness, which is the spirit of the world, lies on the side opposite to the holy Spirit of love; and our own selfish interests are in line with the world in general. Consequently, no one could properly contend for the faith with a selfish motive, for the "faith once delivered unto the saints" would forbid such a motive and condemn it at once. One reason, undoubtedly, why the Lord has permitted his cause to be in disesteem and subject to the attacks of the world, and particularly of evil spirits in the world, is that he desires to have for his people in this "little flock" a tried people, a people of character. Character implies such fixity of purpose and intention that the individual would fight a "good fight" against every influence tending to lead away from the Lord's Word and the Lord's brethren.

The world and its theories are in opposition to the saints; therefore, we must contend against the selfish human and devilish arrangements which prevail at the present time. It is possible for one to be contentious in religious matters, and to "earnestly contend," and yet such a course be not contending "for the faith once delivered to the saints." One might be contentious for some pet theory of his own rather than for those principles of righteousness which the Bible inculcates.

Sometimes it might seem like contention for the faith once delivered to the saints for one person to argue with another on Scriptural subjects, and yet his real motive in so doing might be pride. Pride is a part of selfishness; therefore in contending for his own ideas one might be cultivating pride. The contention which God would approve is that earnest desire to have whatever God's Word teaches. We must not contend with the tongue improperly, nor speak slanderously. In all of our contentions we should manifest the fruits of the holy Spirit—gentleness, brotherly-kindness, love. Thus the proper contention would not partake of anger, hatred, malice or strife.

THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH AND HER MISSION

There can be no question that the church of Christ is an ecclesia, a body, and that Christ Jesus is the Head of the "church which is his body." (Eph. 1:22, 23) There can be no question that the different members of the church are being called—drawn by selective process—from the world of mankind. The testimony of the Scriptures as to the object of the call seems also to be clear. The Apostle Peter says that the church is a people for a purpose; that is, God has a special object or purpose in selecting the church. They are to "show forth the praises of him who hath called them out of darkness into his marvelous light," "that men may see their good works and glorify their Father which is in heaven."—1 Pet. 2:9; Matt. 5:16.

We ask respecting the object of this shining of the light, and the Scriptures answer that it will have an effect upon the world, reproving mankind and setting before them an example of better living, better thinking. We ask whether this is the ultimate object of the call. The Scriptures answer that it is not; that the church is called out to be a privileged people and to become joint-heirs with her Lord in his kingdom. We ask further, whether he really is to have a kingdom. The Scriptures answer, Yes; at the end of this Gospel age he will come, not as a sin-offering, but as a great King, Prophet, Judge, to dispense the blessings secured by his death. We ask respecting the share of the church at the present time. The answer comes that those who faithfully follow the Lamb through good report and evil report, who take up their cross and follow Jesus, will be accounted worthy to be his associates in the kingdom.

THE MISSION OF THE CHURCH

We ask whether the church will be able to combat the evil tendencies in the world. The answer is, Yes; Satan will be bound for a thousand years, that he shall deceive the nations no more till the thousand years shall have been fulfilled. During those years the Savior's mission will be to bless mankind as the "Sun of Righteousness," with "healing" in his beams; and the church is to have a share with him in the blessing of the world. We ask whether this is some new proposition God has made; and the answer comes, No; this was God's plan and purpose before the foundation of the world. This is the Gospel, or good tidings, first declared to Abraham: "In thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed."—Gen. 12:3, etc.

God intended to bless all the members of the human race, all nations and kindreds and tongues, and purposed that the blessing should come to them through the seed of Abraham. The Jewish nation were merely the typical seed; the antitypical seed is The Christ (Jesus the Head and the church his body), who will "bless all the families of the earth." But the world must wait for its blessing until the church shall have been completed, shall have passed the veil, and shall sit with Christ in his throne.

Asked as to the success of the blessing which will attend the work of the church, the Scriptures answer that "Every knee shall bow and every tongue confess;" and that the knowledge of God shall fill the whole earth. As to whether this means a universal salvation—that everybody will be saved—the answer is that God has provided that as all died in Adam, so all are to be revivified, brought back to the privilege of attaining everlasting life, through the merit of Christ's sacrifice; but that the attainment of everlasting life will depend upon the manner in which the privilege is used. None will be coerced or compelled.

The majority of mankind have such respect for righteousness that if its rewards were as sure and as desirable as are those of sin, unquestionably they would prefer to do right. Many tell us that they have been almost forced to do evil. Only the very few are willing to renounce sin and to walk in the narrow way of obedience and self-sacrifice. While those who do so in this age are to have a very special reward, others who love righteousness and hate iniquity will, under the rule of Christ's kingdom, have every assistance without compulsion. They will have co-operation in their endeavors for righteousness. The Scriptures, however, with equal force declare that as death was the original penalty of sin in Adam's case, so it will always be the penalty for sin; and that whoever during the future age sins wilfully shall die the second death, from which there will be no resurrection, no redemption, no hope of recovery.

THE EARTH IS TO BE MAN'S FUTURE HOME

Before sin had entered into the world, the divine provision for our first parents was the Garden of Eden. As we think of this, let our minds turn to the future, guided by the Word of God; and in mental vision we see Paradise restored—not a garden merely, but the entire earth made beautiful, fruitful, sinless, happy. Then we recall the inspired promise so familiar to us—"And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain," for the former things of sin and death will have passed away, and all things will have been made new!—Rev. 21:4, 5.

Recalling St. Peter's words of assurance respecting these glorious "times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began," we see that in God's "due time" the earth is to be brought to the perfection primarily designed for it, and typed in Eden. We believe that time to be near at hand. We see the promised blessings coming. What are our vast irrigation schemes by artesian wells and by aqueducts but fulfilments of the prophecies pertaining to the reign of Christ and the blessing of the earth! "In the wilderness shall waters break out, and streams in the desert. The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them; and the desert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose."—Isa. 35:6, 1.

The Scriptures tell us that after God had created various orders of spirit beings he made man, "a little lower than the angels." (Psa. 8:5) The human race began with Adam and Eve, who had ability to grasp and appreciate the divine arrangement, as the brute creation have not. God made man in his own likeness. The fact that sin came in and brought Father Adam under the sentence of death does not signify that the Heavenly Father had changed His arrangement. The purpose which he had "in the beginning" has never changed.

We can see a reason why the entire world was not made an Eden; namely, God intended to give the race a trial. According to the record of the Scriptures, if the first pair

had maintained their righteousness, their holiness, they would have continued to be perfect and would have propagated a perfect race; and if sin had not come in, God would have been responsible for their maintenance. But God, foreseeing that sin would come in, merely made Eden perfect, and allowed the remainder of the earth to continue in an unfinished condition. Consequently God said to Adam, "Cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life; thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field; in the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread."—Gen. 3:17-19.

EARTH'S IMPERFECTION IS FALLEN MAN'S BLESSING

God could have made the entire earth perfect as easily as he "planted" the little garden of Eden. But he foresaw that if the earth were perfected the death-struggle would be longer, and the degradation of man greater. The poverty of the world has assisted in keeping mankind back from greater depths of iniquity. The sentence, "In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread," was evidently intended as a blessing, that man might learn lessons of experience by battling with the earth for his living. As the Creator said to the man regarding the curse of the earth, it was "for thy [man's] sake." So man has learned that "The wages of sin is death." The Heavenly Father has not, however, changed his plan. When the kingdom is set up, the earth shall yield her increase; and God assures us, "I will make the place of my feet glorious."—Isa. 60:13.

Edison has been the instrument of providence in giving us wonderful electrical devices. Burbank and others have, under divine guidance, worked miracles in horticulture. What beautiful fruits and flowers have followed as results! It is difficult to imagine anything nearer perfection either in Eden of old or the world-wide Eden to be established! In referring to the "times of restitution" the Prophet declares that "the earth shall yield her increase." (Psa. 67:6) We behold preparations for the fulfilment of this promise.

A few years ago a Virginia farmer found an abnormal stool of wheat—one hundred and forty-two stalks, each being a well-developed head—the offspring of a single grain of wheat! Under the name of "Miracle Wheat" it is now being developed slowly in various parts of the country. The average yield appears to be about twelve hundred grains from one kernel. This very year the same peculiarity in oats has been found, a stool growing wild by the roadside. The same divine providence is, additionally, guiding our chemists in economical methods of extracting nitrogen from the atmosphere for feeding the soil, and thus to increase the earth's blessings, in fulfillment of God's promise that he will make his footstool glorious.

Why has not the earth been already made glorious? The answer is that God is allowing the race to propagate first. Had mankind been perfect, they might have learned the lesson of the sinfulness of sin in the same way that the angels have learned. But hastening to commit sin, they have learned evil first and have been subject to all the vicissitudes of sin and death. The angels have learned the other lesson—what righteousness is, what good is—not merely in the abstract, but in an appreciative sense.

MANKIND WILL LEARN A SECOND LESSON

God is now selecting the church. As soon as the church shall have been completed, then mankind will have opportunity to learn the lesson of righteousness, the knowledge of God, and will be raised up out of sin and death, out of the weaknesses that have come to them through sin. This uplifting time is definitely marked out in the Scriptures as "times of restitution"—the restoration of that which was lost. Since that which was lost was human perfection and Edenic bliss, mankind will not get heavenly things, but earthly blessings. God's will shall be accomplished. The world will be brought to perfection during the thousand years of Messiah's reign. The most important piece of restitution work relates to man. The hard, stony selfishness of heart, which is world-wide, is neither God-likeness nor to God's glory.

"Man's inhumanity to man
Makes countless thousands mourn."

Nineteen centuries of preaching show that the cure for this malady is not in our power; and that only the few even desire to seek for the Lord's spirit of gentleness and tenderheartedness. But the great King of Glory is also the Good Physician. He alone can cure the disease of sin and its results. Through him God's promise to Israel will be fulfilled: "I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh." (Ezek. 36:26) This work will proceed from Israel to all the families of the earth, uplifting all the willing and obedient out of sin and death to all that was lost in Eden and redeemed at Calvary. Thank God, the unwilling and disobedient will not be consigned to endless torture, but to the "second death"—"everlasting destruction." The perfected earth will abide forever for the glorious being, man.

THE HEADSHIP OF CHRIST

God has purposed to make a new creation. Incidentally he takes the opportunity to call the church to be associated with her Lord in the divine nature, far above principalities and powers and every name that is named. Thus eventually, when all wilful sinners shall have been blotted out, we find, as the Scriptures state, that "every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and such as are in the sea" will be heard saying, "Blessing and honor and glory and power be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb forever and ever." (Rev. 5:13) Thus the Lord will gather together all the faithful, both in heaven and in earth, under the headship of Christ, whose Head is Jehovah.—Eph. 1:10.

A LEGION OF DEMONS

MARK 4:35; 5:20.—AUGUST 11.

TEXT:—*"God is our Refuge and Strength, a very present help in trouble; therefore will we not fear, though the earth be changed, and though the mountains be cast into the midst of the sea."*—Psalm 46:1, 2.

The forepart of today's study is an account of a very severe wind storm on the Sea of Galilee. Jesus, tired from his teaching and healing, in which vitality went out of him for the relief of the people, had gotten into one of the boats formerly used by some of his disciples in the fishing business and still owned by them. The purpose was to cross the lake for a season of rest and refreshment. The Master in the hinder part of the boat on a cushion was soon fast asleep. Suddenly a terrific storm set in which appalled even those accustomed to such scenes. The winds were blowing and the waves were tossing over the gunwales. It was an emergency; they could not bale out the water fast enough, and they wondered that the Master slept through it all. They came to him and aroused him saying, "Master, carest thou not that we perish?" and he awakened and rebuked the wind saying, "Peace, be still." And immediately "there was a great calm."

The experience was a valuable lesson to the apostles, showing them the wonderful power of God exerted through their Master. And the same lesson comes down to us today. There are storms of life which sometimes sweep over ourselves and the brethren and over the whole household and imperil us, and which seem sure to sink us in despair. Then is the time for us to exercise faith in him who said, "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee." Then is the time to remember the Master's words, "My grace is sufficient for you; my strength is made perfect in your weakness." Whoever can by the exercise of his faith take hold upon the Lord will find a great peace, a great calm come into his heart and into all of his affairs. Then he can remember the Master's promise that "all things shall work together for good to those who love God, and who have been called according to his purpose."—Rom. 8:28.

The text at the head of this study draws to our attention another storm. It pictures the great storm of trouble which in the close of this age will suddenly burst upon the whole world of mankind and in which "Babylon the Great, the Mother of Harlots," "like a great millstone will be cast into the midst of the sea." This same "time of trouble," in some Scriptures, is spoken of as a "whirlwind," the result of letting loose "the four winds of heaven," that will be held until that time.—Rev. 17:5; 18:21; Jer. 25:32; Rev. 7:1.

Again, this trouble is symbolized by a "fire" which will burn not only the earth (symbolical of organized society), but also the heavens (symbolical of ecclesiasticism). This symbolical fire, this great anarchistic blaze, will leave present institutions in "ashes." Upon the ruins, the ashes of the blasted hopes and ambitions of society, political, scientific, and religious, will arise the glorious kingdom of Messiah to bless the world; and it will be as prophesied: "The desire of all nations shall come." It is really what all nations desire, although they do not realize how their desires are to be

accomplished by divine interposition through Messiah's kingdom.

Our text pictures that coming "time of trouble" as a great "storm," which will entirely remove, or change the earth, or the present construction of society, and carry the "mountains," the kingdoms of this present time, into the sea of anarchy. God's people will to some extent be associated with all of these troubles; but they are not to fear, they are to realize that God is at the helm. "When all around their souls give way, he then will be their hope and stay." Although sharing with others in the great disaster, the troubles will not invade their hearts. With them will dwell faith in God and in the glorious promises of his word, and they will be kept in peace thereby.

"JESUS GAVE THEM LEAVE"

In the heading we have connected this study with the demons, because the Scriptures intimate that the demons will have considerable to do with stirring up the great "time of trouble" and discontent with which this age will close and Messiah's kingdom be established.

On the other side of the Lake, as they landed, a man came running toward them, having seen them afar off. He was obsessed—that is to say, demons, the fallen angels mentioned by St. Jude (Jude 6) and St. Peter (2 Pet. 2:4) had gained access, and were in control of him. It was these that recognized Jesus and that spoke through the man's lips, saying, "What have I to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of the Most High God? I adjure thee by God that thou torment me not." This was the answer to the command of Jesus that the fallen spirits should come out of the man. It transpired that not merely one demon had gained access, but many of them, a legion.

The demons realized that they were subject to the commands of Jesus and requested that they be allowed to enter into the swine—to obsess them. The Bible's explanation of how some angels fell from their original perfection and harmony with God, and of why they seek to gain control of humanity and commune with them through mediums, and why they personate the dead, we have not the space to present in this study; but as there are many today more or less under the influence of demonism—spiritism—we will send further information upon postcard request.

Jesus gave the demons the privilege they requested, of passing from the man into the swine, of which there were about 2,000. The swine, like the man, were crazed by the strange outside influence which took possession of their brains. They ran violently down a steep place into the sea and were drowned. Meantime, the man, released from his obsession, was again in his right mind, and praised God for his deliverance. He desired to go with Jesus to become one of his disciples. He wanted to preach to others of the great deliverance which he had experienced and to tell them of this further proof that Jesus was the Messiah. But this was not in harmony with the Lord's judgment of the Father's will, and he refused his company, instructing him to go unto his own house and to tell his friends what great things the Lord had done for him.

He did so, and the people from all the region around, who had known him as a crazy and obsessed man, marveled at his recovery and took note of the fact that Jesus had healed him. Those familiar with such matters claim that probably one-half of all the inmates of our insane asylums are persons obsessed by evil spirits, demons, without any organic disease of the brain. And alas! we see evidences on every hand that these evil spirits are paving the way for a great onslaught upon humanity.

Under the title of Psychic Phenomena spiritism is being examined by some of the prominent college professors of our day. They, like other spirits, are deceived in supposing that the manifestations which come to them are from their dead human friends. The Bible alone makes the matter perfectly clear. It assures us that the dead have no power to thus communicate, and that all such communications come from the demons, who do not dare to tell who they are, for if they did, humanity would be on guard against them; and they, desiring to come closely in contact with humanity, personate and represent variously the dead.

Hypnotism, mesmerism, clairaudient power and clairvoyant power are all part and parcel of the same great deception.

JEWESS RESTORED TO LIFE

MARK 5:21-24, 35-43.—AUGUST 18.

TEXT:—"*And he took the damsel by the hand and said unto her, Talitha cumi, which is, being interpreted, Damsel, I say unto thee, arise.*"—Vs. 41.

When Jesus and the Apostles returned to the vicinity of Capernaum, the people were on the lookout for them, especially Jairus, one of the rulers of the synagogue. He came and fell at Jesus' feet in great distress. He besought him to come and heal his little daughter who lay at the point of death. As they went to the house of Jairus the multitude followed and thronged and delayed the procession. Meantime a messenger arrived from Jairus' house, telling that the child was dead. But Jesus said to the bereaved father, "Be not afraid; only believe."

The multitude was left, and only three of the apostles, Peter, James and John, went on with Jesus and Jairus. When they arrived they beheld a great tumult connected with the customary weeping and wailing. Jesus astonished the mourners by telling them not to weep, that the child was not dead, but asleep. What did he mean? Did the Great Teacher prevaricate? He spoke in the same manner in respect to his friend Lazarus, saying, "Lazarus sleepeth," and then later he explained that he was dead. How shall we understand these words? What were the facts? What was the truth in the case?

"ALL LIVE UNTO HIM"

The key to the matter is given us in our Lord's own words to the Sadducees, a class who denied that there would be any resurrection of the dead or any future life. The Sadducees asked Jesus a question about a woman who had had seven husbands, and who died after them all. They thought to make the teachings of Jesus respecting the resurrection of the dead look ridiculous by this question, but our Lord answered, "You do err, not understanding the Scriptures, nor the power of God."

Jesus proceeded to give them a proof that the dead are not really dead in the sense that the brute beasts are dead, because God in his plan had made an arrangement for the resurrection of humanity from the death state, whereas he has made no arrangement for the resurrection of the brute beasts. The provision for man's resurrection was that God would provide a Redeemer to satisfy the claims of divine justice against Adam and all his race, and who thus would become the Great Deliverer, and, establishing his Messianic kingdom, would release all mankind from the power of death.

From this standpoint, God's standpoint, no human being is dead in the sense of being extinct like the brute beast. Their awakening will be accomplished by Messiah's kingdom, and all will then have fullest opportunity of coming to a knowledge of God's character and his will respecting them; and all will be assisted back to harmony with God, if they so desire, that they may thus reach again the perfection of life lost by disobedience. It is in view of this divine intention, the awakening of the dead, that Jesus spoke of death as a "sleep," a period of rest, of quiet, of unconsciousness.

Jesus' declaration to the Sadducees evidenced all this when he stated that God said to Moses at the burning bush, "I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob." Jesus pointed out that God does not thus speak of himself as being the God of a being absolutely extinct, destroyed, as brute beasts. The expression therefore signifies, in harmony with all the Scriptures, that there will be a resurrection of the dead, and that mankind in general are merely sleeping, waiting for Messiah's kingdom and the morning of awakening, the morning of a better day, in which righteousness will prevail and in which Messiah will be the Great King.

This same thought respecting the sleep of the dead prevails throughout the Bible. We read, for instance, that "Abraham slept with his fathers"; "When Stephen, stoned to death, fell asleep" (Acts 7:60); St. Paul declared that the church "sleep," but that some of its members, alive in the end of the age, at the second coming of Christ, would not need to "sleep," but instead would "be changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye." (1 Cor. 15:52) Again he mentions all that "sleep in Jesus." Figuratively, both good and bad, are thus asleep in Jesus, because all of God's provision for their awakening is in and through Jesus' work of redemption and restitution.—Acts 3:19-21.

We are not to surmise that these sleep in heaven, because both good and bad sleep. For instance, in the statement, "Abraham slept with his fathers," we see two classes—Abraham, the friend of God, and his fathers, heathen men. Be-

sides, heaven is not a sleeping place, but a place of joyful activity and life. Neither could we imagine mankind as sleeping in a Catholic purgatory, nor in a Protestant hell of eternal torture.

Looking into the Bible for an answer as to where they sleep we hear the inspired words, "They that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake." (Dan. 12:2) Ah, that is it!—"Dust to dust," as God said in the beginning to Father Adam, upon whom the sentence fell and through whom we inherit our share: "Cursed is the earth for thy sake," "thorns and thistles shall it bring forth unto thee . . . . until thou return unto the ground from whence thou wast taken." (Gen. 3:17-19) Thus God has provided for Adam and his family a redemption from the power of death and a deliverance from the tomb, by the power of the resurrection; and it is Jesus who declared, "I am the resurrection and the life." The church will be the first from humanity to receive eternal life, and they will be granted a share with Jesus in his resurrection to glory, honor and immortality, as his bride, his joint-heir under his headship. Then, as said the Apostle, will come the world of mankind, "every man in his own order."

THEY LAUGHED AT HIM

Jesus put the statement about the maid's being asleep in a forceful way, in order to impress the great lesson that death does not end all, even though it appears so to do. The awakening which he was about to perform was to be a lesson and illustration of divine power, which will be exercised toward the entire race under the Messianic kingdom. Thus, as he declared, "All that are in their graves shall hear the voice of the Son of Man, and come forth." This statement applies not merely to the saintly church, who will come forth first, sharers in the first resurrection, and whose trial and testing are already past, and whom divine approval has already sealed. The promise of coming forth applies also to the remainder of mankind; all except the spirit-begotten will come forth in a secondary or general resurrection, which will include nearly all mankind, not only the civilized, but also the heathen.

The world will come forth, Jesus said, that they may have a resurrection or raising up, up, up to perfection, to all that was lost in Eden, to all that was redeemed at Calvary. The awakening will be but a preparatory step. It will be accomplished instantaneously, but the further raising up, to mental, moral and physical perfection, will be a gradual work for which a thousand years has been apportioned, and in which the individual will be obliged to co-operate for his advancement and instruction in righteousness. This resurrection of mankind in general Jesus styled, "The resurrection by judgment," by disciplines, by trials and testings. Only those who wilfully reject the Lord and his way will die the second death, from which there will be no resurrection. Christ died once for all, and, according to the Scriptures, he will not die again.

Let us not forget that our Lord's miracles were merely illustrations of the great work which he will do on a world-wide, gigantic scale by and by—through the power and influence of his kingdom. He and the church, as spirit beings, will, of course, be invisible to men, but through earthly Agents the great burden of sickness and sorrow and pain and death will gradually be rolled away, so that by the end of Messiah's reign of a thousand years all the willing and obedient will have attained full human perfection; and the earth, meantime, will have been made to "blossom as the rose," and, as the Lord's footstool, thenceforth it shall be glorious.

SOME INTERESTING QUESTIONS

GREAT COMPANY NOT SHOWN IN THE PYRAMID

Question.—Is there nothing in the Great Pyramid to represent the great company—the bride's virgin companions, who will follow her? (Psa. 45:14) We understand your interpretation to teach that the Queen's Chamber symbolically represents those who will attain perfection on the human plane, and that the King's Chamber symbolically represents those who will attain to the divine nature. Is the great company not shown in the Pyramid, or have you merely neglected to call attention to the feature which symbolizes it?

Answer.—God, during this Gospel age of nearly nineteen centuries, has been calling the church to glory, honor and immortality. During the next age, under Messiah's kingdom, he will open up a way of restitution and return to earthly perfection for all the willing and obedient of mankind. God did not call any to be of the great company class. Those who will ultimately be of that class, "saved as by fire," will get a reward to which they were never called, or invited. There is but one call during this age; as we read, "Ye are called in one hope of your calling." (Eph. 4:4) That call was to self-sacrifice—to walk in the footsteps of Jesus. Only by making that covenant of sacrifice were any of us accepted or begotten of the holy Spirit or privileged to call ourselves the elect of God.

In view of these things it would seem quite appropriate that the Great Pyramid does not show a place for the great company, as though they had been invited to such a place.

The ante-chamber, as we have already pointed out, marks the experiences of the church in the school of Christ, which are necessary before any could pass, by the power of the first resurrection, into the divine perfection symbolized by the King's chamber. We may, therefore, assume that the great company class all come into this ante-chamber, or school, but that only the "faithful unto death" pass beyond it under the granite leaf into the King's Chamber.

SIGNIFICANCE OF PLANES L AND K ON CHART

Question.—In describing the Chart you say, Vol. 1, page 211, "These, when born from the dead in the resurrection, will have the divine nature and form." Please harmonize this statement with another found on page 235, which reads thus: "We know not how long it will be after their change, or perfecting, as spirit beings (plane L), before they as a full and complete company will be glorified (plane K) with the Lord, united with him in power and great glory."

Answer.—The two quotations are in perfect accord. The questioner's difficulty is in respect to what is signified by plane "L" and plane "K" on the Chart. Plane "L" represents the personal glory of our Lord and the church by the power of the first resurrection, from human nature to divine nature. We understand that all the members of the elect church will experience such a change, from mortal to immortal conditions, from human to divine nature, from weakness to power, from dishonor to glory, from animal to spirit conditions (1 Cor. 15:44), before being ushered into the glory of power and dominion represented by plane "K." In other words, the first quotation refers to the personal exaltation of all the spirit-begotten, overcoming class in the first resurrection, to plane "L," and the second to their exaltation to plane "K," which will come when the Heavenly Bridegroom shall present his bride complete, without fault or blame, before the Heavenly Father, as pictured in the 45th Psalm.

THE RESURRECTION POWER NOW AT WORK

Question.—Does the resurrection power now work in the lives of the saints?

Answer.—The resurrection power is now working in the lives of the saints. In Romans 8:11 the Apostle says, "If the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your moral bodies by his Spirit indwelling." This does not refer to future resurrections. It refers to the energizing of your mortal body. The Apostle argues that we were alive unto sin once, but that when we made our full surrender to the Lord we became dead to sin; that when we were begotten of the holy Spirit we became new creatures, in this earthen vessel; and that the body is reckoned dead to sin and the new creature alive to God. Now, the Apostle says, the Spirit of God is able to so quicken our mortal body that instead of being a servant of sin, as it once was, it will be a servant of righteousness.

There is a great difference between the immortal body which we shall have by and by, and the quickening of the mortal body. The new body will not be a flesh body at all. "It is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption; it is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory; it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power; it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spirit body." (1 Cor. 15:42-44) This animal body is to be quickened by the Spirit of God that dwells in us; and by degrees this resurrection process in which the new creature is engaged becomes stronger and stronger. If this continues, our resurrection progresses; and the time will come, at the end of our course, when the Lord will count us worthy of the glorious change, to be like him and share his glory on the high, spirit plane.

THE DIVINE PLAN NOT FINISHED

Question.—When on Calvary our Lord said, "It is finished!" to what did he refer as being completed?

Answer.—This did not mean that our Lord had finished

all the work of the divine plan, for both the work of calling out the bride and presenting her blameless, and the work of the Millennial age were yet future. Our Lord had come into the world to do a work of personal sacrifice. When he was thirty years of age, he presented himself in consecration at Jordan. During the three and a half years of his ministry he continued to offer himself; and this course, figuratively, became a sweet incense ascending before God beyond the veil. This work was one which could not be accomplished in a day. It required three and a half years. To this he referred when he said, "I have a baptism to be baptized with, and how am I straitened till it be accomplished!" (Luke 12:50) He was anxiously awaiting its completion, which was reached at Calvary.

GOD IS MAKING THE WRATH OF MAN TO PRAISE HIM

Question.—If the kingdom of Christ is not yet set up on earth, how may we explain the various reforms, charities, etc., of our time?

Answer.—Apparently, the adversary is trying to run things in his own direction, but the light itself which we are enjoying today is the promised light of divine providence. We read that "many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased," and that "there shall be a time of trouble such as never was."—Dan. 12:1, 4.

But God has supervised the matter of inventions, such as the printing press, the power of steam, and the effects and influences of these in the world. It seems, too, that the movements in the way of better government, etc., are influences based upon the general enlightenment and the efforts of mankind to do as well as they can by each other—specially in ways that selfishness does not hinder. But selfishness has, no doubt, much to do with all manner of reform.

In speaking of the present time, our Lord said that the secrets should be proclaimed on the housetops. Today we see that many real exhibitions of vice, immorality and wrongdoing are brought to light—proclaimed from the housetops. While we do not say that the adversary brings these things to light, yet we can see how the adversary may have had to do with the movement toward communism that once had sway, as well as the movement toward socialism and toward anarchism. These are the things which will tend to bring on the time of trouble. So the wrath of man is made to turn to the praise of God. He is able to make the wrath of man praise him. "Surely the wrath of man shall praise thee; the remainder of wrath shalt thou restrain."—Psa. 76:10.

BROTHER RUSSELL'S SERMONS IN GERMAN AND SWEDISH

Six newspapers in Ohio are now publishing the sermons weekly in the German text—two columns; also one in N. S. Pittsburgh, Pa., one in Aberdeen, S. D., and one in Waco, Texas. We are sure that many of our readers will be glad to know of this for their own convenience and for the sake of their German friends. Lorain, Chillicothe, Fremont, Zanesville, Sandusky and Port Clinton are the cities of Ohio favored in this respect. Do not forget to encourage these publishers with subscriptions and with occasional letters, letting them know that you appreciate the sermon feature.

The Newspaper Syndicate handling Brother Russell's sermons have selected a Swedish journal in the Central West for a Swedish translation of the sermons, namely, "The Kansas City (Swedish) Tribune," Kansas City, Mo. The paper is a weekly, and one dollar will secure it for a year. We hope our Swedish friends will patronize the Tribune and occasionally give its Editor an encouraging word.

TABERNACLE SHADOWS IN FRENCH

For our French readers we now have a supply of the Tabernacle Shadows in the French language, 5c per copy.

Vol. XXXIII BROOKLYN, N. Y., JULY 15, 1912 No. 14

VIEWS FROM THE WATCH TOWER

SOCIAL UNREST GROWS APACE

Our readers know better than do the majority of people the meaning of the present social unrest. Many of them have been studying this subject with us from the standpoint of the divine plan of the ages for more than thirty years. Steadily the unrest which the Bible predicted for the present time—the harvest of this age—is culminating. Many know our expectations respecting October, 1914—that thereabouts the time of trouble will gain full headway and sweep the social structure as a besom of destruction.

While pointing out these things from the Word of God our journal has done all in its power to counsel peace, contentment, faithfulness of heart, appreciation of our multiplied mercies and blessings, the like of which humanity never before enjoyed. More than this, The Watch Tower has striven faithfully in all these thirty-five years past to establish the foundation for true peace amongst the Lord's people—an exact knowledge of God, a correct understanding of the divine Word and an appreciation of the divine attributes.

To some extent the divine blessing has attended our labors. Thousands of Christian people have been awakened, enlightened and brought back to the firm foundation of faith in God and in the Bible. Tens of thousands who have not come to a full consecration of their hearts to the Lord have, nevertheless (according to their letters), taken their stand for righteousness and truth, against sin and error. In these and through these to their families, friends and neighbors a testimony has gone out respecting "Love divine, all love excelling," which has brought many into closer relationship with God, to a greater reverence of his Word and to a considerable faith in respect to the divine plan of the ages. Hundreds of thousands no longer believe that God used his wisdom and power in human creation to bring into being thousands of millions doomed to eternal torture.

The glorious character of God is shining more resplendently in the world than ever before. The light is going forth in about twenty different languages and to practically every nation. We have not succeeded in effecting great things for the world. We did not so convince the nations that they turned from selfishness and sin to righteousness and love. We have not gotten them to "beat their swords into plowshares, nor their spears into pruning-hooks" (Isa. 2:4), nor have we reason to expect that kind of success to follow our labors. From the very beginning we announced the Scriptural program to be that only the wise should understand and that "none of the wicked should understand" (Dan. 12:10) and that during this age only the elect class will be brought into full harmony with God.

We pointed out from the beginning that the world, full of selfishness, would wreck the present civilization and that God, according to the Bible, will use that great time of trouble—anarchy, confusion—as a means to an end, and upon the ruins of the highest civilization the world has yet known, wrecked by human selfishness, God will in his own due time erect the Messianic kingdom, which for centuries he has promised and which eventually will bring the foretold blessing to Israel and to all the nations of the earth. If we were obliged thus to prophesy evil things, we were glad that we could also prophesy glorious things, everlasting blessing, the silver lining to the cloud.

A little more than two years remain before the climax of trouble we anticipate—if we are exactly right about the time. If we are not exactly right, surely we are not far astray, our enemies themselves being the witnesses.

Look at the state of the world. Europe is seething with a Socialism which indeed numbers amongst its hosts many men of noble impulses who fancy that the course they are taking is the only one to bring about a more equitable distribution of the rapidly increasing wealth of the world. Other less noble men in the ranks of the Socialists are thinking evidently less of justice, of a general betterment of society and of a more equitable arrangement of the world's riches, than of their own selfish interests. Others in this growing army of Socialism appear to be wholly demagogic—ignorant prattlers upon subjects which they do not comprehend.

The wage-workers of the world, under the names of Syndicalism, Socialism, etc., have finally realized that the progress of the world really depends upon the coal miners, engineers, machinists, etc. They do not dispute, of course, that brain capacity is also necessary, but they are inclined to say, and still more to think that brain power and capital have appropriated the lion's share of earth's bounties for a long time and that now labor must have the lion's share, even if force be required to obtain it.

The governments of Europe are in perplexity. They wonder and fear what a day or a year may develop, but hope for

the best. Their chief consolation seems to be to claim that "all things continue as they were from the foundation of the world" (2 Pet. 3:4), and that no radical change in the affairs of humanity need be expected. Indeed, while labor feels its power, capital also feels its strength. Capital says that if labor should attempt to block the wheels of industry and progress, labor would be the first to feel the pangs of hunger and would be glad to compromise the situation. It is this confidence on both sides of the question that gives the situation the most serious aspect. When the struggle comes, both parties will feel so confident that neither will be ready to compromise and the results will be the more terrible.

INCREASE OF KNOWLEDGE IS THE CAUSE

Strange as it may at first appear, it is unquestionably true that the troubles upon us are the results of increased knowledge amongst the masses. When people did not know their power, they were content. The ascertainment of their power has brought them discontent and is leading on to anarchy. Had the knowledge come a thousand years sooner, the trouble would have come a thousand years earlier. Had the knowledge come two thousand years sooner, so would have come the discontent, the trouble. It comes now because divine providence has been gradually lifting the veil of ignorance as the morning of the new dispensation is nearing. We have not yet experienced the rising of the Sun of Righteousness, but we have with us the early gray dawn.

The world is awakening before the Master-Hand of the Messianic kingdom, the Controller of earth's affairs. Civilization will wreck itself in its ignorant use and selfish abuse of the wonderful riches which divine providence is showering upon mankind today through the increase of knowledge. The lesson is evident—the recompense also. All the blessings which we have would do good and not harm were it not for the selfishness and hardness of heart which have come upon humanity. Strange to say, this selfishness and hard-heartedness is more manifest amongst the civilized nations than amongst the peoples of India, China and Japan, although all have it, and although the more civilized of mankind cloak their selfishness in many ways.

Selfishness is never grateful. It never cries Enough! Even its gifts and benefactions are likely to be selfishly bestowed. All this is the result of original sin. Disobedience to the divine Word has brought gradual opposition to the divine Spirit of love, kindness, mercy. Tender-heartedness has given place to hard-heartedness. The strife that is coming will undoubtedly be most severe amongst those possessed of large knowledge and great blessings—and this means Europe and America, although the same malignant influence will assuredly exert itself throughout the world.

Just at the appropriate time religion lost its power. Churchianity came instead of Christianity, forms of godliness instead of the Spirit of the Lord. What led up to this? The educators and preachers of the world lost their faith in the Bible. Gradually the spirit of unbelief and the theory of evolution (that man was evolved from lower forms of life and not created) have spread through all the colleges, seminaries, schools and school-books. Now the person who possesses faith in a personal, intelligent, just, wise, powerful and loving God, is considered a simpleton.

Wealthy men have endowed colleges and schools to teach unbelief and Evolution. And now these same men stand aghast with wonder that the people whose faith has been destroyed by Higher Criticism and evolutionary doctrines have no longer faith in God's Word nor in God's providence and are determined to take matters into their own hands. Is it strange? Is it not merely the logical outcome that should have been expected? Do we not see here fulfilled the words of the Prophet Isaiah, "The wisdom of their wise men shall perish, and the understanding of their prudent men shall not be manifest"? (Isa. 29:14) The prudent men are the wealthy, whose generosity has been showered upon these colleges which are doing so destructive a work in the minds of men and preparing them to destroy the very foundations of our present civilization.

POLITICIANS ARE SEEING THINGS

Two great political conventions have been held which have had an awakening and enlightening influence on the minds of many. The candidates have spoken out with considerable freedom. The charges generally made and generally believed are that in each of the two principal parties there is a warfare in progress between a "stand-pat" element (willing to yield nothing) and a reform element. The former have apparently the more particular backing of the financial world and the church influence, Catholic and Protestant. The other, or more progressive party, realizes in some measure the real condition of things in the world today—realizes that capital must make concessions to labor and must improve labor conditions or else a social evolution is inevitable. Mr. Roosevelt and Mr. Bryan are the prominent standard-bearers of the progressive thought in the two great parties. They represent millions of the middle-class people and millions of sympathizers in religious circles and in the world.

The *Boston Globe* quotes Mr. Roosevelt as saying, "With unflinching heart and undimmed eye, we stand at Armageddon and we battle for the Lord." Then the *Globe* quotes the Scripture to which Mr. Roosevelt refers in Rev. 16:16-18: "And he gathered them together into a place called in the Hebrew tongue *Armageddon*. And the seventh angel poured out his vial into the air; and there came a great voice out of the temple of heaven, from the throne, saying, 'It is done.' And there were voices and thunders and lightnings; and there was a great earthquake, such as was not since men were upon the earth, so mighty an earthquake and so great."

We cannot but wonder how much of what he said Mr. Roosevelt believes and appreciates. But the same thought is in the minds of others who profess little knowledge of or faith in the Bible. The *Cincinnati Post*, for instance, commenting on the same subject, says:

"And no one knows what it all means now or next week or before another generation has begun to crawl.

"Men talk among themselves—experienced newspaper men, men who have attended political conventions for years. But they don't print what they talk and don't talk all that they fear.

"There is a feeling that history is being made in a more mysterious manner than any of us can understand—that something is moving more powerfully, than any of us can comprehend—and however much men predict or hazard guesses, nobody knows.

"Sometimes one forgets it is a Republican convention and sees only two tremendous forces about to clash. It is people who are stirring, not mere partisans. And it is the same spirit of unrest, the same mysterious uprising and breaking forth from beneath of a wonderful and awful power that has been breaking forth in spots all over the world."

If, however, it be conceded that the financial powers have set themselves in opposition to progress, those who know the power of money may well fear that the chances of the progressives are small. The money power, through the banks and bankers, has its influence upon all borrowers of money. There lies the danger. The power which can thus control nearly all of the influential is in danger of carrying its power too far and sitting upon the safety-valve until the explosion takes place—just such an explosion as the Bible warns us to expect.

What should be the attitude of God's consecrated people at this time? They should remember the Master's words and not be alarmed. He said, "When ye see these things begin to come to pass, left up your heads, for your deliverance draweth nigh." (Luke 21:28) This does not mean that we should ever act or feel boastfully, or even carelessly, respecting the welfare of humanity so seriously at stake. It means that with quiet confidence we may look up to God, and, realizing his omnipotence, wisdom and love, we may trust him where we cannot trace him and rest assured that all things are working together for good—especially for the church, but indirectly also for the interests of all humanity.

God's consecrated people should more than ever "set their affections on things above and not on things on the earth." (Col. 3:2) More than all, we should spend time and influence in the service of God, of the truth, of our families and of all men, so far as we have opportunity. We should do them good, calming instead of arousing their fears. Instead of dilating particularly upon the trouble coming, we should expatiate especially upon the time beyond the trouble, encouraging them to faith in the Omnipotent One who has promised that through the seed of Abraham "all the families of the earth shall be blessed."—Gal. 3:29.

Today we have wonderful opportunities. The world is waking up and inquiring about the meaning of the wonderful things of our day. Intelligent people are perplexed. They need the very light upon the divine plan which we have for them. The Golden Rule bids us to do toward them as we would have them do toward us, if we were in the dark and they in the light. The class extension work is being greatly blessed and is reaching many. The colporteur work is gathering, we believe, many ripe grains.

On the whole, the Lord's blessing seems to be specially manifest thus far this year. No doubt many who are now receiving the truth respecting the harvest time, etc., have been God's children for a considerable time, and under divine providential guidance, direction, discipline, in preparation for the kingdom. To these present truth comes as a special blessing and re-

freshment and as a special ripening for the kingdom. Today's opportunities become tests also of our love and loyalty to God. "He that reapeth receiveth wages and gathereth fruit unto life eternal." (John 4:36) Freely have we received, freely let us give to others the glorious light of present truth.—Matt. 10:8.

MEN'S HEARTS FAILING THEM FOR FEAR

There is a general apprehension of something unusual and fearful. Religious people of all denominations are distressed, as well as politicians and financiers. Large sums of money are still forthcoming, but chiefly from the wealthy. And these are growing weary of their trials as the supporters, "pillars," of their respective systems. Church attendance grows more slim, and many who do attend service confess that their worship is largely a form of godliness and custom and habit rather than an intelligent appreciation of their privileges. The people believe—they know not what. The "new thought" offered them as a soul-satisfying portion is, "Our forefathers generations back were monkeys." There is nothing soul-satisfying in this statement. The true-hearted are starving, not for bread, nor for water, but for hearing the Word of the Lord. (Amos 8:11) The formalists are discouraged because of lack of numbers. All are in dread lest some one should ask questions respecting the various creeds of churchianity, knowing that no one of intelligence can defend even one creed of Christendom.

Various schemes have been tried. Various good endeavors have been made to awaken the public to an interest in religious things. The public interest in churchianity has died out. Evolution and Higher Criticism have undermined faith. The public say, "The preachers themselves do not believe the Bible. Why should we?"

Finally, the solemn thought is being pressed home daily that a great trial time has come upon Christianity as a whole —a day of judgment; and that in harmony with the adage, "In union there is strength," all Christian people should draw together for mutual support. The cry is, "A federation" (a confederacy—Isa. 8:12). This movement, foretold by the Scriptures, is now nearing a fulfilment, much as the matter was disputed when we called attention to it thirty-five years ago.

As we write, the Conference in Lambeth Palace, London, is in session. The chief representatives of the churches in Great Britain and the United States have assembled to see to what extent they can let down the bars of custom and superstition and recognize Protestant Christians of all denominations as fellow-Christians of the one body of Christ—the one church. Very soon there is to be a general meeting in the United States to which the proposals of the Lambeth Conference will be submitted.

The feeling of fear, uncertainty, need of union, is so generally felt that undoubtedly many Christians of various denominations will be glad to be associated, federated. The hope is that thus they will present a solid, religious backing to the government and that the Government will give them in return a support. It will not surely amount to a union between church and state, as in the old world, but it will amount to an understanding between church and state, for the state also is feeling its need of backing. The result will be an apparently triumphant churchianity, a brilliant flare-up of success. However, according to our understanding of the Bible, their prosperity will be short-lived, for it has no real foundation of Christian faith, but merely the excuse of necessity for its federative existence.

With the flare-up of churchianity's apparent prosperity all not joining in will be esteemed as enemies, however conscientious. And they will have hard experiences for a little while, until the Master shall say, "It is enough. Come up higher." "To him that overcometh will I give power over the nations"; "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne"; "Be thou faithful unto death and I will give thee a crown of life."—Rev. 2:26; 3:21; 2:10.

BAPTISTS DIVIDED ON COMMUNION QUESTION

"Toronto, Ont., June 15.—The question of restricted communion was discussed by the Toronto Association of Baptist churches in Parkdale Baptist church yesterday. The leading speaker on the subject was the Rev. J. J. Ross, who maintained that 'the ordinance of the Lord's Supper is unmistakably a restricted ordinance, and those who partake of it unworthily will bring judgment upon themselves.'

"The debate was opened in the morning, but gave way to other topics until it was resumed by arrangement in the midst of the Women's Missionary Conference in the afternoon. A lively period of three-quarters of an hour was given up to it. Mr. A. M. Denovan took the view that it was never proven that Christ did not baptize infants a span long. Rev. T. T. Shields quickly retorted that it certainly had been proven that he had never done so.

"A heated discussion followed between those who maintained that the love of God in people's hearts entitled them to a place at the communion table, and the others who rigidly held that the only passport was immersion.

"An extra session was held at 6:30 p.m., when the discussion was vigorously continued. No decision was reached."—*Woodstock, Ont., Daily Express.*

Our Baptist brethren are having their troubles. After more than eighteen centuries they are half inclined to believe that they have made a huge mistake! Perhaps all the heathen who have not been baptized did not go to hell and are not still there roasting! Perhaps the Presbyterians, Congregationalists, Methodists, Lutherans, Roman Catholics, Episcopalians, etc., are not in hell for similar insufficiency of water!

Perhaps, after all, it has been a mistake that our Baptist friends have been excluding others from their communion table—claiming that, not being completely immersed in water, these are not members of the true church of Christ, not eligible to heaven, etc. It is certainly time that our dear Baptist brethren became established with definite ideas about baptism, or else they should take that particular word from their denominational name.

The foregoing suggestion from the *Daily Express* respecting the baptism of infants is an outgrowth of the general misunderstanding of the subject of baptism.

The Bible teaches clearly enough that Christians are baptized into the church, which is the body of Christ, but nowhere does it say that it is the water baptism which inducts the believers into Christ. On the contrary, it most explicitly declares that the real, true baptism, is baptism "into Christ's death." To be immersed into Christ's death plainly enough means to have a participation with the Redeemer in the death which he died—death to self-will, death to earthly hopes and aims and prospects. Only such as are thus immersed into his death will be in his likeness in the resurrection. "If we suffer with him, we shall reign with him"; "If we be dead with him, we shall live with him."—Rom. 6:4-6; Col. 2:12; 2 Tim. 2:12,11.

If our Baptist brethren come to see what the true baptism is, they will all the more appreciate the water baptism as merely a symbol of the true immersion Our baptism into Christ's death inducts us into the mystical body of Christ, which is the church, whose names are written in heaven.—Eph. 1:22, 23; Heb. 12:23.

Throughout this age some Presbyterians, Methodists, Baptists, Roman Catholics, Episcopalians and others have had this real baptism into Christ's death, and accordingly have had their names written in the Lamb's Book of Life. These constitute the members of the one church. Some of them were confused on the subject of baptism and used sprinkling—incorrectly, unscripturally. Others used immersion unscripturally—the Disciple friends thinking it the same as the Jewish baptism practised at the first advent of our Lord, for the remission of sin and for bringing Israel back into harmony with the Law Covenant. Others used water immersion improperly instead of the real immersion into Christ's death. The true view of the subject shows that we all in the past have been more or less in error. Humiliating as this fact is, it needs to be learned if we would make any progress.

YET ANOTHER LESSON

Another lesson we need to learn is that not merely the church, which is the body of Christ, is to be saved, but that God has a salvation—although a very different one—for others. —Heb. 2:3; Jude 3.

Under the creeds formulated during the dark ages we supposed that since the whole world is under divine condemnation, therefore every infant is so condemned. We were right in this, but wrong in respect to the character of the condemnation. None of our race were condemned to eternal torment or purgatory. The Bible explicitly tells us that we were condemned to death. (Rom. 6:23; Gen. 2:17; 3:19) As a consequence mankind are a dying race. The dying processes of the six thousand years have affected the race mentally, morally and physically.—Psa. 51:5; Jer. 31:29, 30.

Only those baptized into Christ's death and thus vitally united to the living Head of the church, have as yet escaped from the condemnation which rests upon the world. But God's provision, which begins with the church, will proceed, after her glorification, to bless the world. (Gal. 3:8, 16, 29). Then all the non-elect, all the unbaptized, all out of Christ—infants, heathen, all—will be subjects of the blessed Millennial kingdom. All will have the opportunity, not to be baptized into the body of Christ, but to experience the promised restitution to human perfection and earthly paradise—all that was lost in Eden, all that was redeemed at Calvary.—Acts 3:19-21.

"THE WORD WAS MADE FLESH"

Our finite minds have difficulty in understanding some of the deep things of Scripture because of our insufficiency of knowledge and of experience. All that we know of our Lord's pre-human existence is revealed in the Word of God. The Scriptures state that our Lord was rich and became poor; not that he remained rich and seemed to become poor, but that he actually became poor that we might become rich. The Apostle says that he divested himself of those conditions that he had before he became human, and that he took a bondman's form. He was made flesh. The explanation is given, "A body hast thou prepared me," a human body, and thus he was made "a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death."—Heb. 10:5; 2:9.

Putting together the Scriptural statements on the subject we have this: In his pre-human existence our Lord was the *Logos*, "the beginning of the creation of God," the Alpha of all God's creation, and the Omega in that Jehovah created only this One. Of the *Logos* it is written, "All things were made by him, and without him was not anything made that was made." (John 1:3) He was on the spirit plane, next to the Father.

In the divine plan of the ages, formulated long before, a proposition was made our Lord with a view to the redemption of mankind; provision was made that if obedient to the Father's will, the *Logos* would receive still further exaltation, even to the divine nature. For this joy set before him, our Lord took the various steps necessary to complete the great work of redemption. The contract into which he entered with the Father was one which involved much humiliation. While there was a sacrifice of power, of honor, of glory, yet no sacrifice of life was involved in the first step taken; namely, his acceptance of the Father's arrangement that he should be made flesh; that he should become a human being, that he should give up his existence on the heavenly plane.

Originally, as the *Logos*, our Lord was a soul on the spirit plane, in the sense that any intelligent being is a soul; for the word "soul" signifies being; and the transfer of the life principle to a human body brought him to the earthly plane. The life principle was the same that he had before, therefore the personality was the same. It was important to have identity of mind; and this he had by divine arrangement.

A BODY GIVEN FOR THE PURPOSE OF DEATH

The Scriptures do not explain how the spark of life belonging to the spirit being known as the *Logos* became transferred to the human plane. When our Lord was thus changed, he merely took the step of getting ready to become the sacrifice for sinners. In his pre-existent state he could not have given the corresponding price for Adam; for he had not the human life to offer. But when he became a human being and had reached the age of maturity, he was in condition to be the sin-offering.

We would say that our Lord as a human being was the same soul as in his pre-existent condition; for he had the same life principle as before; and that when he became human he did not die as a spirit being. The Scriptures declare that our Lord was "made flesh," a human being; and that the difference between him and mankind in general was that he was perfect —"holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners"—separate from the remainder of the human race. (Heb. 7:26) The Scriptures also explain that this difference resulted from the fact that he was specially begotten. The life principle by which he was conceived came directly from the Heavenly Father.

This explanation is altogether different from the theory known as incarnation. The thought of the theory of incarnation is that a spirit being took possession of an earthly being —became incarnate, dwelt in the flesh, in the same way that some are possessed of evil spirits which dwell within them. This, we believe, is a wrong thought respecting our Lord which has come down from the "dark ages." There is nothing in the Scriptures about incarnation. The Scriptures do not say that our Lord's body died, while the spirit being within it remained alive. But the Bible says that our Lord left the glory which he had with the Father and was found in fashion as a man; that he humbled himself unto death, even unto the death of the cross; that he was "put to death in the flesh."—John 17:4, 5; 1 Pet. 3:18; Phil. 2:8.

"MADE FLESH AND DWELT AMONG US"

From what we know of childhood we recognize it as the period of development. And so we read of our Lord: "And the child grew, and waxed strong, filled with wisdom; and the grace of God was upon him. . . . And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man." (Luke 2:40, 52) His was not a mind that had all the experiences and intelligence of his pre-existent state. We read that he grew in wisdom. His mind grew. Of course, being perfect he would learn much more rapidly and accurately than would others; and this accounts for the fact that as a child he was able to confound the Doctors of the Law. With his natural qualities of mind he was able to grasp the situation, to take in things rapidly.

St. Luke tells us that at the age of twelve years our Lord accompanied his mother and Joseph to Jerusalem. The Jewish children were accustomed to attending religious services; and it was a custom that Jewish boys should make a consecration at the age at which Jesus did. Jesus knew that he was different from other boys. Very likely he told them the facts relating to his miraculous birth. It is assumed by some that he was even charged with having an illegitimate birth. But since we do not know definitely about this, we must confine ourselves to the Scriptures.

Our Lord came into the world in a miraculous manner for the purpose of fulfilling the prophecies, which were all to attain fulfilment in him. Naturally he would avail himself of the first opportunity of ascertaining the requirements. When at twelve years of age he learned from the Doctors of the Law that he could not assume the priestly function as a boy, he made no further attempt, but was subject to his parents, or to Mary and her husband, who properly enough were his guardians until he reached thirty years of age, when his first step was to make full consecration of himself.

"I COME TO DO THY WILL"

Our Lord at thirty years of age certainly had much knowledge that Adam did not possess when he was on trial. Our Lord had some knowledge of what constitutes sin and its penalty. He had also knowledge of the fact that God had arranged for the redemption of mankind, through the great Mediator of the New Covenant—a Savior, a Redeemer, a Deliverer. He knew that the inability of others to keep the divine law written in the Decalogue and his ability to keep that law, constituted the difference between himself and others.

Doubtless our Lord's mother had told him of his miraculous birth and of the message that had come through Gabriel and of the prophecy of Anna and of Simeon. And he had in mind the prophecy respecting himself and the future of the great Messiah that was to come and deliver the world. All this knowledge was very valuable.

But the thing that our Lord evidently lacked was the knowledge of the deeper things of the Scriptures. He evidently found perplexities in the Bible; for he had not received the holy Spirit. Although he might be better qualified to understand these things than were the fallen race, yet, as the Apostle says, "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, . . . neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." (1 Cor. 2:14) Jesus had not been begotten of the holy Spirit; therefore he did not have the understanding of the prophecies and symbols

"THE HEAVENS WERE OPENED"

All this knowledge began to come upon him when he was begotten of the holy Spirit. He began to understand the higher things, the deep things of God. He had understood in a measure about the lamb that was slain as the sin-offering and the things about the putting away of sin, but nothing to identify the one who was to be the great Deliverer or to explain the wonderful pictures in the Scriptures. Just as soon as he was begotten of the holy Spirit he began to see that if he would reign, it would be by a manifestation of loyalty to God and to righteousness. As soon as he was illuminated he saw the things pertaining to the suffering.

During our Lord's earthly ministry he learned obedience through the things which he suffered. (Heb. 5:8) And thus he received the great illumination which was so powerful an addition to him—just as it is a great illumination to us to see the terms and conditions of our calling—that we must walk in the steps of our Lord if we would reign with him.

Just in what manner the higher things were revealed to our Lord we may not know. St. Paul tells us of wonderful revelations which were made to him. Doubtless our Lord also had revelations, but just what was revealed to him thus, in order that he might understand his pre-human conditions, etc., we may not know. Nor do we know how all the acts and experiences during the previous period of his existence before he became flesh could have been impressed suddenly upon his mind. The same God who is able to give us a spirit body which will assimilate all the experiences of the present life,

could also impress upon Jesus all the previous experiences which he had had.

The impress of previous experiences did not come to him during his boyhood; for he was then growing in knowledge and in stature, and in favor with God and man. We believe that the impress came at the time of his consecration at Jordan; and that not only had he there given to him the impress of his previous experiences with the Father and of the remote past, but also that he had light given to him upon the Scriptures so that he could grasp the full purport of what he had done when he gave himself in consecration.

As the "heavens" continued to open to our Lord, he would see that the experiences of the Messiah, which could not have been commanded under the Law Covenant, were nevertheless to be his privilege as he would see these to be the divine will, as he would see these to be the divine law in the prophecies. As a sheep would be dumb before its shearers, so he would not rebel as his rights were taken from him. He would know that he was to be put to death; and that he was to be an innocent victim. He was to be the crucified One, the antitype of the brazen serpent.

Having consecrated to fulfil all things written in the Book Jesus was fully prepared for his every experience. This we see also is the purport of that beautiful picture in Revelation of the scroll sealed with seven seals. The proclamation was made, "Who is worthy to open the Book, and to loose the seals thereof?" (Rev. 5:2) Up to that time no one had been found who could open the Book. But at that time our Lord was found worthy to open the Book, and to him was given all the knowledge in the divine plan, that he might carry out these things in the sacrificing of the flesh.

At his consecration at Jordan our Lord gave up the human life—he gave up all rights and privileges as a human being. The ultimate purpose of this full surrender of his life was that he might bring everlasting life to mankind. The Father's arrangement with him, however, was such that he might retain his personality, his identity. But after he was begotten of the holy Spirit, he was a new creature; and as a new creature he had the human body in which to develop character, in which to have his experiences. This new creature was developed to perfection during the three and one-half years of his ministry, and was ready for the spirit body which had been promised to him.

If our Lord had not been found perfect, faithful, loyal, in his pre-human condition, he never would have had this privilege of becoming a man and the Redeemer of men. Because of his obedience as a man he received the greater glory, immortality. He was perfect under all the favorable conditions before he became a man; he was faithful as a man, and being glorified, he is still faithful. Therefore he maintains the same relationship to God and to righteousness that he ever had. Consequently he would not specially need any of those things which assist in making character; for he has never shown any defects to be rectified. But we may suppose that the experiences which he had in his pre-existent state, and while he was a man, and since he was glorified, all co-operate to make his character intelligent and loyal in the very highest sense.

HE "MANIFESTED HIS GLORY"

Let us examine some Scriptures which might be understood to imply that our Lord had a clear recollection of his pre-human experiences with the Father.

(1) "Then answered Jesus and said unto them, Verily, verily I say unto you, the Son can no nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do; for what things soever he doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise." (John 5:19) These words were used in connection with the healing of the sick. They do not, of course, mean that the Lord had seen the Father healing the sick, but that he had seen the Father's will, the Father's plan.

Our Lord was simply carrying out the Father's will concerning him: "The eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped; then shall the lame man leap as an hart"; etc. (Isa. 35:5, 6) These miracles of healing were some of the things that he was to do, as written in the Scriptures. He knew that he was to do these miracles and that they were a foreshadowing of the things to be done by and by. As we read, "This beginning of miracles did Jesus . . . . and manifested forth his glory."—John 2:11.

(2) "I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was. When there were no depths, I was brought forth; when there were no fountains abounding with water. Before the mountains were settled, before the hills was I brought forth." (Prov. 8:23-25) This passage may be viewed either as a prophecy of what our Lord understood of his previous condition, or as a figure of speech setting forth the wisdom of God all through the ages. But since the wisdom of God is specially revealed in our Lord Jesus, so this was a foreshadowing of what Jesus might know respecting his pre-human condition.

(3) When our Lord at twelve years of age asked, "Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?" (Luke 2:49) he would have in mind the Heavenly Father, just as any consecrated child of God might think of him. From the information which he had received from his mother, Mary, he would know of his miraculous birth and of his special mission in the world. His mother knew that he could not be true to himself and his mission unless she told him about these things. Having been told that he was specially holy and miraculously born for this very purpose, he now turned to Mary and asked, Is it possible that you should not know that I should be about my Father's business? Did not you tell me of this thing? He was surprised that Mary and Joseph should not understand that this was the very thing for him to do.

MEMORY THE MEANS OF IDENTIFICATION

(4) Our Lord's statement, "Before Abraham was, I am" (John 8:58), serves to identify the man Jesus with his previous condition as the *Logos* before he was made flesh and dwelt among us. He is the same today, although he has been received to the spirit plane. He says, "I am he that liveth, and was dead; and behold I am alive forevermore." (Rev. 1:18) Originally he was on the spirit plane. Later as a man, he lived; he died, At his resurrection he was made alive on the spirit plane, far above angels, principalities and powers. But the identity, the personality, is the same.

And we can readily believe that the memory of things past is still with our Lord. We also think that he remembers the experiences which he had in the flesh and also those which he had before he became flesh. Otherwise, he could not identify himself. Memory seems to be the means of identification of our personality. Nothing in this Scripture would seem to imply that our Lord was born into the world with the knowledge of all his previous experiences. After his consecration he received the knowledge by some means which we are not great enough to understand—by some power the Father used; for the Father has all power.

(5) "Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, and today, and forever." (Heb. 13:8) This statement would not identify our Lord with his previous condition; for in his pre-existent state, he was not Jesus. He was called Jesus at his birth. He became Jesus Christ at his baptism. "By his knowledge shall my Righteous Servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities." (Isa. 53:11) Our Lord began to bear the iniquities of the world at his consecration, and finished so doing at his crucifixion. Since then he has been reckoning certain persons to be members of himself. When the holy Spirit came upon him and the heavens were opened unto him, he probably received the knowledge which would enable him to overcome.

Before his consecration, when our Lord was a perfect man just as Adam was, we know not what force Satan's temptations would have had; but when his mind was opened, then Satan came to tempt him along the very line of his work, along the line of the consecration which he had already made. Satan attempted to overthrow his consecration and to thwart its completion. How much knowledge our Lord had we do not know; but the Heavenly Father gave him sufficient to enable him to come off conqueror. And so with us. Our Lord gives us knowledge of himself and of the Father. He shows us the relation between the sufferings of this present time and the glories that are to follow. Thus by knowledge all the members of the body of this Great Righteous Servant will be permitted to come off "more than conquerors" by his grace.

THE NATURAL MAN CANNOT PERCEIVE SPIRITUAL THINGS

(6) "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, We speak that we do know, and testify that we have seen; and ye receive not our witness." (John 3:11) The intimation is that our Lord could tell heavenly things, but that he was not disposed to do so, because Nicodemus and others found it difficult to receive even the earthly things. How could Jesus tell of the heavenly things? By that time he may have had the impress of memory in respect to his pre-existent condition.

We are to tell the heavenly things, but not to the natural man. "Cast not your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn again and rend you." (Matt. 7:6) Our Lord said that he had many things to tell his disciples, but that they could not receive them until the holy Spirit came. (John 16:12, 13) And, "The holy Spirit was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified." (John 7:39) "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him, neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned"; "but God hath

revealed them unto us by his Spirit, for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God." (1 Cor. 2:14, 10) Now if the holy Spirit reveals some of the deep things to us, how much more could the perfect mind of our Lord enter into the holy things?

"THE GLORY WHICH I HAD WITH THEE"

(7) Our Lord's words, "Father, glorify thou me with thine own self, with the glory which I had with thee, before the world was" (John 17:5), would not signify that he had no knowledge of his prospective share in the divine nature. He had the assurance of the Scriptures, one of which was that he should be very high; another that the Lord would give unto him the kingdom; another says that Jehovah God would "divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he hath poured out his soul unto death" (Isa. 53:12); still another says, "The Lord hath sworn and will not repent, Thou art a Priest forever, after the order of Melchizedek." (Psa. 110:4) He was to be both a Priest and a King of very high state and honor.

Probably our Lord knew these things fully after he was begotten of the holy Spirit, even as St. Paul was caught away to the third heaven and received knowledge of wonderful things "which it is not lawful for a man to utter." (2 Cor. 12:4) And so it is most probable that our Lord Jesus had some special revelation; for we read that he said that "as the Father hath life in himself, so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself" (John 5:26); thus indicating his knowledge of the fact that both he and the church would share in the divine nature and inherency of life.

Our Lord's words show that he was not wishing to aspire to these glorious things. Very humbly he said, "Father, I have come to do thy will. Father, I shall perform the work thou hast given me to do and I shall be glad to be returned to the glory I had with thee—to ask nothing as a favor. I am glad that I have had this privilege, and I think that I shall not suffer by reason of my obedience to thy will. I shall be glad, therefore, to be with thee in the glory that I shared with thee before the world was."

He did not say to the Father, "Do not forget to pay me; do not forget what thou didst promise." No. He did the Father's will without any thought of compensation connected with it. So with us. Anyone who looks for the divine nature merely as a reward and feels that it is due him, is taking an improper view. We should feel that to be on the side of righteousness and to be identified with our Lord Jesus is a great privilege, if there be no reward of the divine nature at all; but the thought of the reward is a great incentive to run patiently for something super-abundant, exceedingly beyond what we could have asked or thought.

VICTORIOUS CHRIST HEADS PROCESSION

"When he ascended up on high he led a multitude of captives."—Eph. 4:8.

This grand expression respecting the glorious outcome of the Savior's work is quoted by the Apostle Paul from the Psalms. (68:18) The figure thus thrust before our mental eye is that of a great conqueror whose victory is being heralded. With the Romans we know that it was a custom that generals returning from various wars were granted what were termed "triumphs"—that is to say, triumphal processions, that the people might have tangible evidence of their victories.

Thus, for instance, Titus, returning from the war upon the Jews in A. D. 70, brought with him certain notable persons and the Golden Candlestick from the Temple, and these were displayed to the eyes of the people following the conqueror. They were subsequently sculptured on the Arch of Titus, still standing in Rome. And evidently the custom was still older than the days of the Romans, since it was so prophetically set forth by the Prophet David.

Let us permit our mental eye to feast upon the scene presented in our text. Jesus, in fulfilment of the divine program, had left the heavenly condition and descended to earth, taking a bondman's form or nature in order "that he, by the grace of God, might taste for every man" (Heb. 2:9); in order that he might rescue Adam and his race from the dying and death condition in which they were—under divine sentence and under the power of Satan.

Therefore the Redeemer counted not his life precious to him, but freely delivered himself up for our offenses and died, "the just for the unjust," that he might bring mankind back into harmony with God. His humiliation ended in death, but his triumph began when, as is recorded, God raised him from the dead by his own power, and set him at the right hand of his own majesty—"far above angels, principalities and powers and every name that is named, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow."

HE THAT ASCENDED FIRST DESCENDED

The prophecy says nothing about our Lord's descending from the heavenly glory to the earthly nature, but St. Paul supplies this feature saying, "He that ascended, what is it but that he first descended, into the lower condition of the earth?" (Verse 9) Thus the Apostle asserts that he that descended is he that ascended above all heights, that all things may be fulfilled through him.

An important thought here noted is that our Lord not only left the heavenly glory, but that he returned to a still more excellent glory—he did not suffer the disastrous loss of the heavenly nature as a result of his obedience in taking the human nature. As he left the heavenly nature to take the human, so in returning he left the human nature to ascend again to that which he had before, with the additional glory of the divine nature.

LEADING FORTH THE CAPTIVES

With most of the conquerors in olden times the captives were made slaves. Not so, however, will be the result of Jesus' victory. He leads forth to liberty and eternal life those who have been slaves of sin and death. His train of captives is a long one indeed; the procession has already occupied eighteen centuries, and is yet to be the great work of the thousand years of the Messianic reign!

First of all in the procession are the saints—"the church of the first-born, whose names are written in heaven." In the forefront of them we see the twelve Apostles, St. Paul taking the place of Judas. The Apostles are to be kings who are to reign with Christ in pre-eminent positions; but following them are some others of the saintly company of kings—in all a "little flock."

Then will come a company, more numerous, but less heroic —"a great multitude," uncrowned, but with "palm branches," not antitypical priests, but antitypical Levites, associates and servants of the royal priesthood, the bride. Then will follow (Heb. 11:38-40) other faithful ones of the past, the ancient worthies. The Prophet speaks also of the "rebellious house." The classes previously specified were not rebellious, but gladly and willingly forsook all to do the will of the Father and to attain the liberty of sons of God, as the first-fruits of the triumph of the Lamb.

But during the thousand years of Christ's reign he will lead forth the "rebellious house"—the world of mankind—not all of them, we may be sure, for some, the Scriptures positively declare, will die the second death, because, after realizing their deliverance, they will love sin and will therefore be destroyed as enemies of righteousness. But it is a blessed thought that many of those who are now aliens, strangers and foreigners from God through wicked works, are in this condition of opposition, not willingly, not intelligently, but by reason of the ignorance and weaknesses which came to them by heredity, under the reign of sin and death.

It is to be a distinct feature of the great triumph of Immanuel that every eye shall be opened and every ear unstopped, that "the knowledge of the glory of God shall fill the whole earth," during his glorious reign of righteousness. Are we not distinctly told of the time that will follow, in which all the willing and obedient shall receive the holy Spirit, which then will be poured out "upon all flesh" even as now, during this Gospel age, it is poured out upon God's "servants and handmaids" only?—Joel 2:28.

Oh, that will be a glorious triumph for the great Redeemer! In the language of the Bible, "He shall see the fruitage of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied." (Isa. 53:11) What a glorious fruitage!—not only his own exaltation—not only the exaltation of his faithful bride class, and the additional exaltation of "the virgins, her companions, which follow her," and the exaltation of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and all the prophets, but finally the deliverance to human perfection of all the groaning creation willing to accept the same upon the divine terms of loyalty to God and to the principles of his government, as these shall be made known to them.

"HE GAVE GIFTS UNTO MEN"

It was the custom in olden times that a king coming into authority and power should give gifts according to his wealth. Governors and princes would be needed and he would dispense

the honors of these offices to those found faithful in his service, loyal in the defense of his cause. So, in this prophetic reference to our Lord's ascension, it is declared not only that he would lead forth a multitude of captives, granting them freedom, liberty, blessings, but also that he would confer certain gifts.

We might have spent valuable time guessing the nature of these gifts which the great Redeemer would dispense, but such a waste of time is unnecessary, since the Apostle proceeds to explain the matter and tells us what gifts are meant. He says, "And he gave some apostles, and some prophets, and some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers."

There is an astounding thought connected with this statement—that the apostles were not self-appointed, and that they had no successors, and that the work of evangelizing, or making known the "good tidings," and the pastoral work and the teaching work amongst believers, are all under the supervision of the Head of the church, the great Victor, who redeemed us with his blood, and who proposes, first, to lead forth a bride class, and subsequently all the willing and obedient.

It behooves us to notice that the Apostle does not intimate that Jesus gave to some Methodism, to others Presbyterianism, and others Roman Catholicism, etc. No, when we held such thoughts it was because of more or less misunderstanding—because we failed to see first that there is but the "one church of the Living God, whose names are written in heaven," and second, that that one church is not any of the various sects and parties, but includes the saintly in all of these; "the Lord knoweth them that are his."

NOT GIVEN TO CONVERT THE WORLD

Noting carefully the Apostle's argument in connection with our text, we perceive that the Master did not give these gifts for the conversion of the world. He does specify, however, what they were for, namely, "for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ"—the church, the bride class. Is it supposable that the Apostle erred in this statement and that the fact is the reverse—that these gifts were provided for the conversion of the world, and that the Apostle thoroughly misunderstood the matter and supposed that they were given for the perfecting of the saints, for the edifying of the body of Christ? No! We are to be taught by the Apostle and may be sure that there is no mistake, no error in his statement.

Notice the force of the expression, "the perfecting of the saints." It is not sufficient that believers have a little knowledge, a little faith, and a measure of sanctification or devotion to the Lord, for after they have received and attained all of these things they still need the instruction of the apostles and ministers, pastors and teachers, provided by the great Head of the church for their perfecting. Ah! there is a force and depth of meaning in that word perfecting. We remember that of our Head it is written, "Being made perfect through suffering, he became the Author of eternal salvation to all who obey him." So his followers are made perfect through suffering.

The Master's perfecting, indeed, was a little different from ours, and yet there is a similarity between the two. He was perfect before he humbled himself; he was still perfect as the Man Christ Jesus, who gave himself; but as a result of his consecration he received a begetting of the holy Spirit to the divine nature, and his development as a new creature required that he faithfully carry out his vow, or covenant of sacrifice, in the doing of the will of the Heavenly Father. By such faithfulness he perfected himself on the divine plane—that is, he proved himself worthy according to the covenant—"Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive glory, honor, dominion and power."—Rev. 5:12.

Similarly the followers of Jesus are to be sharers with him in the sufferings of this present time and in the glories which shall follow, for "If we suffer with him we shall also reign with him." (2 Tim. 2:12) Although we are imperfect in the flesh, while he was perfect, yet the robe of his righteousness, the merit of his sacrifice, covers all of our blemishes and makes us, as his footstep followers, holy and acceptable before the Father, as joint-sacrificers with Jesus.

The begetting of the holy Spirit starts us in the life divine. We are not to be perfected in the flesh, but in the spirit, and our perfection and acceptance with the Father will be demonstrated by our loyalty of heart and the fulness and thoroughness with which we submit our all to the divine will and seek to glorify God in our bodies and spirits which are his. (1 Cor. 6:20) Our justification comes to us as a reward of faith, regardless of works, but our glorification will follow as a reward for faithfulness.

THESE GIFTS ARE LASTING

Not merely for a few days or years were these gifts to the church provided; on the contrary, they were to endure throughout this entire age, until the church perfected shall pass beyond the veil and be forever with her Redeemer, to share his glory, honor and immortality. The Lord from time to time has raised up evangelists, pastors and teachers for this glorious service of preparing the "chaste virgin," the church, to be the bride in glory. But the Apostolic office, as represented in the twelve specially provided by the Father, has continued and needs no replenishment. We still have their instructions as fully as the early church, "that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto every good work." —2 Tim. 3:16, 17.

That the Apostle did not understand the matter to be merely for a day, but throughout this age, until the completion of the church, is clearly evidenced by his statement, namely, that all these gifts were for the edification of the body of Christ and the perfecting of the saints to the last—"until we all come to the unity of the faith and to the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ."

This is a wonderful statement, however we view it. Shall we say that it applies to each individual member of the church of Christ, and that each individual must come into that full unity of faith, and that full knowledge of the Son of God, and the perfection of manhood in Christ, and to a developed stature of maturity in Christ? Or shall we understand the meaning to be, until the entire church of Christ shall have reached a full knowledge and shall, as a whole, have come to the condition of a perfect man, of which Christ is the Head and we are the members—to the full development of stature of the Anointed, the Messiah, Head and members? We believe that the latter is the Apostle's thought.

Nevertheless, it cannot be disputed that the selection of these members all the way down the age must have been along the lines here indicated. Individually, one partially developed would not be fitted for the kingdom. One not in the unity of the faith would not be suitable. One not developed to the proper measure or stature as a Christian would not be suitable. Nothing is more plain than that the individual Christian needs a great deal of instruction, edification, building up in the holy faith, testing, proving, chiseling, polishing, fitting, preparing before he shall be ready for a place in the kingdom.

GOD'S PEOPLE NO LONGER NEED BE MISLED

This thought is confirmed by the succeeding verses, in which the Apostle tells us that by the assistance of these, the divinely provided gifts, teachers, etc., God's people need no longer, like children, to be tossed to and fro, and be misled by the sleight of men and cunning craftiness of those who would deceive. On the contrary, being sincere, and speaking the truth in love, they are to grow up into membership in the Anointed One in all things—coming fully and completely into fellowship and obedience, under the Head, even Christ.—Verses 14, 15.

Proceeding, the Apostle tells us that all who are recognized as members of the body of Christ must be properly joined to the Head—by a proper compact, or covenant, intelligently made and fully intended. This union must be compacted, and it requires the entire Gospel age to effect this development and compacting as members, that the whole body of the Anointed may be one—symmetrical, beautiful, co-operative—making increase in its members and edifying itself in love—growing in grace and in knowledge and in character-likeness to the Head.—V. 16.

In conclusion, then, the Captain of our Salvation has gone before. He has accepted us as his joint-heirs, and we are following on, blest by the gifts which he dispensed when he ascended up on high; and we, in turn, will be his gifts to the world of mankind. When as priests and kings we shall be associated with our Lord, we shall bless all the families of the earth with a glorious opportunity of knowledge and obedience, that they may, if they will, attain life everlasting, "the gift of God, through Jesus Christ our Lord."—Rom. 6:23.

DELIVERANCE TO THE CAPTIVES

Luke 4:16-30.—August 25.

Text:—*"He came unto his own, and they that were his own received him not."*—John 1:11.

The childhood home of Jesus was Nazareth, although he was born in Bethlehem. The people of Nazareth would of course feel a certain sense of pride in their fellow-citizen whose fame was spreading throughout all Galilee and Judea. Hear-

ing of the mighty works and wonderful teachings given at Capernaum, they not unnaturally said to themselves, Well, of course he will soon return to his own town and give us a sight of his wonderful power. And yet, they reflected, Is not this Jesus, whose mother and brethren we know, and who has for a long time been identified with Joseph's carpenter shop?

They could scarcely believe what they had heard. How could it be that so soon after leaving home he had become so famous and so powerful? He never did such miracles in all the years that we knew him, said they. They did not, of course, understand as we do that he received his power as a special benediction when he was thirty years of age, as a result of his full consecration of his life to the divine service, that devotion being symbolized by his immersion in Jordan.

THE SYNAGOGUE AT NAZARETH

At length he came to Nazareth. It was on a Sabbath day. For long years he had been recognized as one of the few able to read, and had done the congregational reading of the Holy Scriptures. This was therefore just what they wished and expected him to do on the Sabbath day of his return. He went into the synagogue and received from the custodian the scroll bearing the lesson, and read the lesson for the day.

Thus far all went well; but when Jesus began to comment upon passages of Scripture there was a commotion; first whisperings of disapproval, and finally an outburst of wrath against him. Ah! they thought, this young man has quite lost his head since he left us! We know indeed that his people of Nazareth have a mean name throughout the country, that ours is reputed to be a mean city of little learning; but who would expect that one of our own citizens would return to our midst and tell us to our faces that we are not worthy of having an exhibition of his power—such as he has given to other cities and to their people!

Their pride and patriotism made them wild. They drove him out of the synagogue with angry demonstrations. They insulted and jostled him and led the way toward the rear of their city, not daring to lay hands on him, but merely as a mob gnashing upon him and pushing onward in a direction in which they desired that they might lead him to the brow of a hill, and then push him over.

For a little way Jesus went, but then he turned and passed through their midst, overawing them by the dignity of his presence, and perhaps realizing that their course toward him was merely a corroboration of what he had said respecting their unworthiness to have a share of the blessing of God which he was distributing.

THE TRUTH THAT ANGERED

What were the words that thus angered them? At first we read, "All bare him witness, and wondered at the gracious words that proceeded out of his mouth." What, then, made the change? It was the plain declaration that because they did not appreciate him enough, because they did not believe in him fully, therefore it would not be God's will that he should perform any miracles for them. He backed up his statement with illustrations from the past which angered them still more. He said that in Elijah's day there was a famine in the land, and that Elijah was not sent to the widows of Israel, but to a widow across the border, in a Gentile city.

Again, Elisha was not sent to cleanse the lepers of Israel, but did cleanse a Gentile, Naaman. Alas, for the power of pride! "Pride goeth before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall." Instead of the people of Nazareth getting angry and resenting these things, they should have said, Tell us, then, of our faults and help us to overcome them. If God has blessings, surely we, as Israelites, may have our share if we will but come into the right attitude of heart. Instruct and pray for us. But the proud cannot see their difficulties hence the Scriptural declaration of the special favor and blessing to the humble.

THE LESSON FROM ISAIAH

The lesson for that Sabbath was from Isaiah 61: 1-3. It was an excellent text, and the sermon on it was from the very ablest of all teachers. The whole difficulty was with the heart condition of the hearers; and this is true of many a sermon and many a lesson. How his hearers should have rejoiced to know that they were living in the day of the fulfilment of these words! He had been anointed by the Father with the holy Spirit, that he might declare good tidings to the poor. Surely many of them were poor and needy!

We read further that Jehovah sent Jesus to heal the broken-hearted. Oh, how those words ought to have appealed to all in that audience! How they would have appealed to any that were broken-hearted! The difficulty probably was that they were hard-hearted. Satan has hardened the hearts of mankind in general. God's promise is that under Messiah's glorious reign he will take away the "stony hearts" and give them "hearts of flesh."

The declaration further was that the blind would receive their sight, that liberty would be granted to the captives, that the bruised and injured would be healed, and that "the acceptable year of the Lord" would be proclaimed. These were indeed wonderful words of life! No wonder we read that "they wondered at the gracious words that proceeded out of his mouth."

"DELIVERANCE TO THE CAPTIVES"

This part of the message might have been applied in part to themselves. Were they not captives, bound by the fetters of sin, bound also by the fetters and chains of heredity, sickness, imperfection and death? Were not some of them actually blind also, as respected the eyes of their understanding? Evidently the time for them to see had not arrived—they were not in the condition to receive the blessing of the anointing of their eyes of understanding. Were they not all bruised by the fall, imperfect, blemished, wounded, sore—mentally, morally and physically—and was not the Great Deliverer there to set them at liberty, in part at least, from these difficulties? Surely that was a favorable moment, and they were a favored people!

But the work that Jesus was doing was merely the proclamation of these things, with a few illustrations or examples of healing, etc. The real time for him to accomplish the deliverance of the captives, the liberating of the sin-bruised, and the giving of sight to the blind, that all might sing the praises of God and appreciate his favor—these actual blessings belonged to the Messianic kingdom time. What Jesus was doing was merely a foreshadowing of the great things to be accomplished future—"In the times of restitution of all things which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets." —Acts 3:19-21.

PROCLAIMING "THE ACCEPTABLE YEAR"

This brief expression, so little understood, pointed out the special work of Jesus, far more important than the miracles. The term, "acceptable year," or acceptable time, refers to this entire Gospel age of more than eighteen centuries. It is "the acceptable time" in the sense that during this period God is willing, through the merit of Christ's sacrifice, to accept from amongst the sinners a little flock of joint-sacrificers to share with their Redeemer in his kingdom.

No opportunity had been granted in the past to become dead with Jesus, to present their bodies living sacrifices, to walk in his footsteps, to fill up the afflictions of Christ, to suffer with him. The proclamation of this opportunity waited until Jesus had made his own consecration, and all who accepted his message and became his followers did so under this invitation or proclamation. It was the privilege of becoming the sons of God by a begetting of the holy Spirit. (John 1:13) The acceptance of these sacrifices began at Pentecost and still continues. Who can say how soon the door of privilege to offer acceptable sacrifices may close? Then the door to the high calling, to the bride class, will be shut—forever. Other blessings God has, but not other privileges than those of this age for suffering with Christ and for participating with him in his reign of glory.

FAITHFUL UNTO DEATH

MARK 6:14-29.—SEPTEMBER 1.

TEXT:—*"Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life."*—Rev. 2:10.

Today's study includes the tragedy connected with John the Baptist's death. King Herod had put away his own wife, and was living unlawfully with the wife of his brother Philip—Herodias—a vain woman apparently and without conscience, who, for ambition's sake, had dared everything that she might occupy the place of a queen. John the Baptist, a fearless teacher, in his preaching had referred to the fact that King Herod was living in violation of the divine law, and that this was likely also to bring upon the people a war, for his wife whom he had put away was the daughter of King Aretas.

Herodias heard of John's teachings, and was both angry and fearful—angry that he should dare to speak so of her relationship to the king—fearful, lest the words of this eloquent man, which greatly moved the masses, might alienate her from

the king, or that perhaps the king himself might come under the influence of John's searching words. Had Herod put her away, as would have been his duty, she would have been an ashamed and a disgraced woman in the eyes of the world, for the Herods and their affairs were well known in Rome and elsewhere. So a denouement would have left her a pitiable spectacle, and in her pride she was ready to do murder, or anything that would divert such a calamity.

Herod feared John and feared the people who believed John to be a prophet, but Herodias feared neither God nor man. However, in deference to Herodias' wish, Herod had John arrested for his temerity. Even then Herod liked to hear John talk, though he still kept him a prisoner. All the more Herodias feared the influence of John. She brooded and she schemed. The king's birthday came, and she encouraged him to make it a great day, a festival, and to ask to the banquet his principal friends. In the midst of the carousal she dressed her own daughter in the airy costume of the dancing girls of the East, and sent her in to dance before the king and his friends.

So great a condescension implied that the king should make some return. He asked the girl what he should give her, promising anything that she would ask, even to the half of his kingdom. This was exactly what the wicked mother had planned; and true to her agreement the child returned for instructions. Herodias had gotten Herod into her net. He had refused to kill John in spite of all her endeavors. Now, in the presence of his friends, on his own birthday, at his own suggestion, he had obligated himself to do anything that might be asked. If the daughter demurred to ask for the head of John the Baptist, the mother probably told her that if John lived both of them would probably sooner or later be outcasts; that his death was necessary.

BOUND BY AN UNHOLY OATH

When the maiden returned and made her request, the king was grieved, yet, not being a humble man, nor a God-fearing man, but merely a proud man with a man-fearing spirit, he felt himself bound to comply with his oath given in the presence of those great men. Was he not king? Was it not his birthday? Had he not freely promised, even though under the influence of intoxicating liquor, and should he now draw back and show the white feather, and imply that he had some confidence in this peculiar prophet? No! The execution was accomplished; the head was delivered to Herodias; the king's honor (?) was maintained.

Alas, poor world! How many are its snares of pride in the wrong things, and in fear of the wrong person! How many are its attempts to preserve and increase its pleasures and honors!

In a previous study we heard Jesus' words, that no greater prophet than John had ever arisen. We fully agree that he was a great man, a holy man; a prophet of the Lord was he. We fully agree that he will have a great reward in the future —with all the holy prophets, and Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, he will come forth from the death-state perfect as a man, because he was found faithful, even unto death. He will be one of the class mentioned by the Lord through the Prophet David—"Instead of thy fathers, shall be thy children, whom thou [Messiah] shalt make princes in all the earth." (Psa. 45:16) John will be one of those glorious princes on the earthly plane, one of the representatives of Messiah and the church, who will be on the Heavenly and invisible plane, like unto the angels, partakers of the divine nature.

Those who selected our lesson text evidently overlooked the fact that John the Baptist is not one of the church class referred to in the Lord's words, "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life." (Rev. 2:10) John will indeed get life everlasting as a glorious portion, but he will not be a member of the bride class, as we have shown. This honor belongs to us who have received Jesus and become his disciples and been begotten of the holy Spirit, since Pentecost. We again quote St. Paul's words concerning the ancient worthies: "All these died in faith, not having received the things promised them," "that they, without us, should not be made perfect." (Heb. 11:13, 38-40) We, the church, the bride class, the little flock, called to be joint-heirs with Jesus in his kingdom, must get our share of the blessing first. The bride and the Bridegroom must be perfected in the first resurrection before the kingdom can be established; and it must be established before the blessing can go to any others—even to the ancient worthies.

WHEREIN IS THE DIFFERENCE?

If John the Baptist was faithful unto death, just as faithful as those will be who have lived since Pentecost, wherein is the difference, and why should he receive an earthly reward and the bride class receive the heavenly reward? There are several reasons for this. In the matter of justice God could not justly, not properly, show any preference to one person, or to one class; but in matters of grace, of favor, as the Scriptures declare, He may do what he will with his own. If A owed $5 each to B and C, he could not justly give the entire $10 to one of them and repudiate the debt to the other. But if he wished to make presents, gifts, he may give B $1 and C $9, or give the entire $10 to B and nothing to C.

So far as the world was concerned, God was under no obligation whatever to do anything to help Adam and his race; hence the entire matter of redemption is of grace. But since Jehovah entered into covenant with his Son that the latter should pay the redemption price for the world, and then become its Restorer, Jesus, having laid down his life, the matter has passed from being purely of grace, and has connected with it a certain measure of justice between God and Christ.

So far as man is concerned there is a measure of obligation, because God has already stated what the results of the redemption work shall be—"all the families of the earth shall be blessed"; there shall be a "restitution of all things which God hath spoken by the mouth of all the holy prophets." God is therefore bound to humanity by principles of justice, because he has made these promises. Yea, he has given his oath that all the families of the earth shall be blessed. St. Paul's argument on this subject is that God had thus bound himself by two immutable or unchangeable things—his word and his oath.

But nothing in God's promise bound him to give John the Baptist a place in the bride class. The Apostle Peter declares that God foreknew this class, predestinated it as a class, but not as individuals, from before the foundation of the world; and he is now making a selection according to principles, to determine who may be of this class. He gave no opportunity to John the Baptist to be of this class, but in his providence permitted him to die when he had accomplished the work specially intended for him. None could be of this bride class who died prior to Pentecost, for there the holy Spirit of adoption and begetting was first given, and without that none could occupy the plane of sons; those under Moses and of his house were servants.

SOME INTERESTING LETTRS

FAITHFUL BARKING COMMENDED

DEARLY BELOVED PASTOR:—

When first reading the article in a past TOWER illustrating our "Old Creature," by a dog, it seemed a little amusing; but recently circumstances here in the Philadelphia ecclesia brought forth the need of studying the parable of the "Sheep."

We learn that all shepherds keep a good "sheep dog," which is gentle, kind, never vicious, but does considerable barking when the sheep are inclined to stray; and all sheep belonging to the dog's owner are very dear to the dog. Its sense of smell is very acute; if a sheep had been near a wolf the dog would detect it and bark at the wayward one.

Learning the above facts partly answered a puzzle in my mind, namely, whenever any "sheep" in our ecclesia strays from any of the doctrinal points, he or she is usually very composed about it, but those watching for such danger-places make a big fuss over it. It is talked and talked about. They seem very restless, disturbed, even to loud words.

Questioning the different "barkers" I find each ready to suffer anything if only the wanderer may return—have his eyes opened. So I have concluded that it belongs to the faithful "dog" to bark and bark at even the smell of a wolf, and that to err in the "dog" nature is nothing to compare to erring in doctrine. In other words, dogs would better bark too much than not to be watchers and warners of the approach of the wolf.

BEREAN QUESTION STUDIES

DEAR BRETHREN:—I have been for many years much impressed with the importance of Berean methods of study—indeed, ever since the Society began to bring them to our attention as specially desirable methods. I have since then aimed to follow them closely in my personal studies, but have realized all the while that, as classes, we were not getting hold of them properly.

A recent visit of the dear brethren, coupled with careful consideration of a letter (Tower, Sept. 15), has impressed the matter upon me as never before. I trust a new impetus has been given to "class" study and, with the thought of pos-

sibly adding somewhat to the impression, I am sending out to ecclesias in this vicinity some suggestions, of which the enclosed is a copy:—

(1) Berean Study is as old as the church.

(2) The volumes—STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES—like the Scriptures themselves, are full of interrogation points—that is, they suggest questions everywhere.

(3) The average mind is not competent to make the best arrangement of these questions—linking them together in their proper, logical order.

(4) The arranged Questions, furnished by the Brooklyn Tabernacle, supply this lack.

(5) These "Question" Studies have been with us for years.

(6) The Bethel "Table Talks" are on the same general plan—surely a forceful demonstration and endorsement of the method.

(7) They foster concentration of thought, and give a definite aim in study.

(8) They develop ability in analyzing subjects.

(9) They assist all the members of a class to study along uniform lines.

(10) The church being made up of separate ecclesias, in proportion as the method is followed by the different ecclesias, the church as a whole is studying along uniform lines.

(11) We acknowledge the value of uniformity by our unanimous adoption of it in use of daily hymns and daily Manna.

(12) They make the leader of a class less a teacher, thus dividing up with the class, more fully, the responsibility for development.

(13) It encourages class study, which is surely discouraged in proportion as the leader, either from inclination or as the result of less practical methods, monopolizes the explanation of Studies.

(14) It supplies the best basis for study of the lesson beforehand, and neglect of this spells proportionate failure in any method of class work.

(15) Each member of a class has a responsibility in this respect which he or she cannot afford to ignore. (It is our opinion that where classes fail to make the method practical the main difficulty lies (a) in a lack of preparatory study; (b) in failure of the leader to impress its importance.)

(16) Where an ecclesia lacks "speaking" talent, it supplies a good substitute, and we believe in many cases more than a substitute. We incline to the conviction that less dependence on preaching and more on "class" study should be the order.

(17) Should the appointed leader be absent from any "study," the class thus equipped could carry along the study without interruption, any member reasonably well-informed being competent to take charge.

(18) If for any reason it should not be deemed wise to have a regularly appointed leader, different members would be prepared to lead in turn—each member recognizing such a one as leader, while filling the office, directing all questions and answers to him—thus holding the class to order as effectually as though they had a regularly appointed leader.

(19) Any answer to a question should be supported by at least two good Scriptures. If each member recognizes his or her responsibility in finding these Scriptures, it will guarantee a study which should make any subject interesting to any visitor present who is interested in the Bible.

(20) Should any question come up on any paragraph, after those prescribed for the study have been dealt with, the leader, by turning it over to the class, instead of answering himself, will make the study the more helpful. (This method of turning questions over to the class would often avoid a delicate situation, should the question be such as would call for an answer which might not be acceptable to the questioner. The leader, in thus sharing the responsibility with the class, could express himself the more freely, and no special objection could be taken.)

(21) With the "Berean Question" method uniformly followed, in any "study" where a specific number of questions are marked off, and kept up with, we would be at home if temporarily present with any class the world over.

(22) Additionally, we all desire to be as closely in touch with the "isolated" ones as possible, and it would seem that nothing could operate more effectually in this direction than the widest possible application of this principle of oneness in study.

(23) The fact that the Society is continually urging this method gives the unmistakable inference that WE NEED IT.

Your brother in service, W. W. BLACK.

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THE LAW MAGNIFIED AND MADE HONORABLE

"The Lord . . . will magnify the law and make it honorable."—Isa. 42:21.

"Where there is no law there is no transgression." (Rom. 4:15.), would seem to be an axiom—a self-evident truth. No one could transgress a law that was not given to him, that was not applicable to him. In his discussion of the Jewish view of the Mosaic Law, St. Paul used this statement to show that the Jews misunderstood the matter. They had the thought that because God had given them the law at Mt. Sinai, they were justified in God's sight by that law. But receiving a law is not keeping that law. Therefore, the apostle shows them that by the deeds of the law no flesh could be justified in God's sight.—Rom. 3:20.

Continuing the argument a little further, St. Paul shows that the entire human race was once in God's favor, as represented in Adam before sin entered. While the race was in that condition of perfection mankind was just before God. But when sin entered, it brought the penalty of alienation from God and of death. Thenceforth the human race was dead in trespasses and in sin, having no right to everlasting life. In that condition God did not give mankind a law, but permitted the world to go without law up to the time of Moses. And even in the time of Moses God did not give the law to the whole world, but only to the Jewish nation. If Israel had been able to keep the law that was given to them at Mt. Sinai, they would have been a living nation—not a dying nation, as the other nations are.

The apostle proceeds to say that the commandment, which was ordained to life, Israel found to be unto death. (Rom. 7:10) A man cannot be justified by receiving the law, but by keeping the law. The rest of the world were less condemned than the Jews, for, says the apostle, God did not give them that law and they never came under the penalty of that law. So, then, Israel found the law to work death; and they were under more condemnation than were any other people in the world; for they were condemned, not only in Adam, but also by failure to keep the law. By the Law Covenant given on Mt. Sinai, they were lifted out of the Adamic condemnation and put on trial afresh; and when they failed to keep that law, they had a second condemnation put upon them.

St. Paul is here demonstrating the mistake of thinking that the Law Covenant gave Israel a special immunity from condemnation. Then he shows that there are some Gentiles who have never come under the Law Covenant, as did the Jew, but who, nevertheless, show a work of progress, which the Jew had not done; for these Gentiles show a law of love ruling in their hearts. In some respects they judge themselves, and in other respects their consciences excuse or accuse them.

The apostle says that since the Jews are condemned by the law given at Mt. Sinai, and since the rest of the world recognize by their consciences that they are condemned, then the whole world stands guilty in God's sight. What then is that which condemns the Gentiles? The answer is, The original law of God remaining in their hearts, though marred by the fall.

God created our first parents in such a condition of perfection that the law of God was clear, or manifest, to them instinctively. Now, because of the fall, if a man were to use his moral perceptions alone, one man might say that a thing is wrong, and another might say that it is right; each would be guided by his own mind, his own conscience. St. Paul's argument is that no matter how fallen a man may be, he still has so much of the original law in his heart that his conscience will either accuse him of wrong-doing or excuse his conduct; and unless extremely degraded he will know that it is wrong to steal or to take human life.

To whatever extent a man retains this original law of God to that extent he is responsible. No one can sufficiently excuse himself so as to say that he is worthy of eternal life. The Jew could not claim that he had kept the law, for his atonement for sin was an acknowledgment that he had failed to do so; and the Gentile's conscience testified to his unworthiness. Therefore, neither was deserving of eternal life. Continuing his argument the apostle explains that none of the fallen race

can obtain eternal life except by the way that God has provided; and that way is in Christ alone. By the divine arrangement Christ, who was perfect, was made flesh and gave himself on behalf of Adam and his race, so that God can be just and still be the justifier of him who believes in Jesus.—Rom. 3:26.

Neither Jew nor Gentile can have eternal life except as the result of faith in Jesus Christ. The apostle tells us that we cannot merit eternal life, but that we must do all in our power to manifest that if we were perfect we would keep God's law, and that in proportion as we know the divine will, the divine law, we should prove our desire to be in harmony with God by doing his will to the best of our ability. The merit of Christ will off-set, compensate for, the weaknesses of the flesh through heredity, and ultimately we shall attain to full perfection. But none except those who show their willingness to keep the law will reach this perfection; they must be willing to spare no effort to keep that law, so far as in them lies.

TWO CLASSES RELEASED FROM ADAMIC CONDEMNATION

"Where no law is there is no transgression," for "sin is not imputed when there is no law." (Rom. 4:15; 5:13.) The world has not yet come under individual condemnation; for the world has not yet been placed under divine law. Why not? Up to the present time the world is under the Adamic sentence, and only those who are lifted out of that condemnation can come under another sentence. The whole world was condemned to death under Father Adam, and mankind cannot be sentenced again until they get out from under the first condemnation. The only ones who have, in any sense of the word, been released from this Adamic condemnation are two classes; the natural Israelites and the spiritual Israelites. The Jews could not be tried for life or death without a release in one form or another from the Adamic condemnation. This release they obtained by the Law Covenant; but it was only typical, for the blood of bulls and goats can never take away sin.—Heb. 10:4.

The only ones who have been actually released are those Jews who came under the covenant of sacrifice, the covenant which began with the Gospel age with Christ, and those Gentiles who have entered into this covenant relationship with Christ. As many of these as have entered into this relationship are on trial before divine law, and subject to eternal life or eternal death under that law. If obedient to that law they will get eternal life. If disobedient to that law of the spirit of life, and if they wilfully sin after having been begotten of the Spirit, they will get death.

In the case of the Jew it would be the second death if their Law Covenant had been the full and complete covenant which God intended for them. But it was not; it was merely a tentative covenant to give them a tentative offer of eternal life; it was simply a typical covenant. The real one is that which God intended should come in the New Covenant. "The days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a New Covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah; not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt" (Jer. 31:31, 32); God will make a New Covenant with them. He will take away the stony heart out of their flesh and will give them a heart of flesh, that they may keep his statutes and ordinance and do them (Ezek. 11:19), under his New Covenant—the real Law Covenant.

Under that real Law Covenant every Jew will have the fullest opportunity of coming into harmony with God. And the basis of that harmony will be the "better sacrifice" than the typical ones, which Moses offered. The great Mediator will be the Messiah—Christ the Head and the church his body. And that great Mediator has the basis of his power in the fact that he has provided the "better sacrifices." He provided first his own sacrifice; and during the Gospel age he has been providing other sacrifices—those who came unto the Father by him.

THE LAW AN INDICATION OF GOD'S WILL

The church of this Gospel age is not under the Jewish Law Covenant; for that Law Covenant was given to the Jew and not to the Gentile nor to the Christian church. We are not to speak of ourselves as "Gentiles" or as "Jews," but as the church of God. God has made a different covenant with us; it is spoken of as a covenant of sacrifice: "Gather my saints together under me; those who have made a covenant with me by sacrifice." (Psa. 50:5.) This covenant has been made individually with the entire church of Christ.

Shall we say, then, that the Gospel church is without a law? By no means! We are not under that Law Covenant—the covenant which demands of us to keep that law and which binds us to keep it. But we are under a covenant of Grace—a covenant which makes special provision for us—for our inability to do perfectly. Nevertheless we are still under divine law. Every intelligent creature is under divine law. To the extent of her knowledge the church will be responsible to the law of God.

How may we know the law of God? We may know of it in part by the Jewish law and the Ten Commandments. Do we ignore the Ten Commandments? By no means. We appreciate them as showing us the law of God. It is one thing to strive to keep them in mind, in spirit, and a totally different thing to keep them inviolate, as those under the law covenanted to do; for whoever breaks one of the commandments breaks them all. (James 2:10.) We are therefore not under the law, but under grace. (Rom. 6:14) That same law which God gave to Israel, so beautifully represented on tables of stone, is not over us; but the spirit of that law is applicable to us. St. Paul says that the righteousness of the law, the true keeping of the law, is fulfilled in us, the Gospel church, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.—Rom. 8:4.

With the Gospel church God is dealing differently from the manner in which he dealt with the Jewish people. God's arrangement with the Jews was that they should keep the law both in letter and in spirit, or else they would be condemned. His arrangement with the Gospel church is that they should fulfill that law to the best of their ability, and that the merit of Christ will make up for their deficiency. While we of the Gospel church would like to keep the law we are as unable to keep it, as were the Jews, on account of the weakness of the flesh. Every Christian should feel that he is strictly under obligation to the divine law more than are those who are not Christians, because of his greater enlightenment in divine things, in the instructions of Christ and the apostles and of the holy spirit. Not only is he to seek to live up to the requirements of the law, but he covenants to do much more. He covenants to sacrifice even those rights which he would have under the law, and to present his body a sacrifice, not even calling for his own rights under the law.

OBEDIENCE TO THE EXTENT OF ABILITY

We keep the spirit of the Ten Commandments because it is the spirit of righteousness, the Spirit of God. We have become God's children; and having his Spirit, we are to do those things which are pleasing to him. If, therefore, we can from the Ten Commandments learn what things are pleasing to him, then they are lessons that we should learn. If any other thing shows us what is pleasing to God, we are to do it. But we are not under the Law Covenant. We do not hope for eternal life by keeping it. God's arrangement for us is that being obedient to the extent of our ability and having the spirit of the law in our hearts, we are counted as perfect in his sight and will receive his blessing.

Some of the Jews thought that they kept the Ten Commandments, yet to their surprise they did not get eternal life. The teachings of Jesus and the apostles show us that every one of the commandments of the law had a deeper meaning than the Jews could discern, and that their failure to perceive the spirit of the law was one of the reasons why they could not get eternal life. Take the commandment which says, "Thou shalt have no other gods before me." Some people really have other gods in their hearts; some idolize their husbands; with others their wives have the first place; with some it is their stocks and bonds. This is idolatry.

The Scriptures tell us that the commandment, "Thou shalt not kill," has a deeper significance than to take life. He who is angry with his brother, he who would like the opportunity to kill and who abstains from so doing merely because of fear, is in his heart a murderer. Similarly, the Master says, He that looks upon a woman to lust after her commits adultery in his heart; he is restrained only because of lack of opportunity.

When we begin to get the deeper view of the teachings of the Ten Commandments we see how the Lord magnified the law and made it honorable. (Isa. 42:21.) But the fact that Jesus was able to keep the law shows that God did not give an unjust law; that it could be kept; that the weakness was in the fallen condition of humanity, and not in the law.

THE SABBATH OF FAITH IN JESUS' FINISHED WORK

Now as these other commandments have a higher and deeper meaning than that which appears upon the surface, so also has the fourth commandment, which relates to the Sabbath day. The Apostle Paul gives us the key to this higher meaning when he says that this Seventh day typifies the rest of faith for the people of God. (Heb. 4:9, 10.) Whoever abides in Christ is a Sabbath-keeper, and those who do not abide in him lose this rest and thus fail to be Sabbath-keepers. There is a still further expansion of the Sabbath in its typical significance to the thousand-year day. Then humanity will be at rest from Satan, from sin, from the trials, besetments and difficulties of the present time; and all mankind will have

an opportunity of entering into this rest. The church will enter into it first, in her resurrection. Next the Jew will enter into that rest, when he shall understand God's plan and become the recipient of God's blessing and eternal favors in the Millennial day; and finally, before its close, all the world will come under its blessed influence. This was the promise of God to Abraham when he said, "In thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed." (Gen. 12:3.) They will be blessed in the wonderful provisions of that great Sabbath day.

The fourth commandment was never given to us, and we are not enjoined to keep the seventh day either in the letter or in the spirit. The Sabbath day was never given to the church. A higher thought than that of physical rest is given us. God has provided for us a rest of faith in Christ's finished work. We may enjoy our rest seven days of the week, and every day in the year. If we begin to appreciate that thought we have a rest about which the Jew knows nothing. This is an earnest of the future when we shall be through with all our difficulties and shall remain ever in the rest of God.

SUNDAY AN ILLUSTRATION OF THE NEW ORDER OF EVENTS

We are not under commandments ourselves in God's sight; we are not under obligation to keep any day of the week. Why do we observe a Sabbath? Because of our own volition. The law of this land provides for the keeping of Sunday. We are glad that the law makes this provision for a quiet day once a week. We are pleased to have it so, and would not have any objection if there were two Sundays each week. We do think that the day chosen is a beautiful reminder of our Lord's resurrection. It is also a fine illustration of the new order of things so soon to be established; and it is a very appropriate day for us. As for the world, quite probably, under the New Covenant there will be a day set special for them in which they will rest from labors, etc. Perhaps it will be the seventh day.

SONS NOT UNDER LAW OF SERVANTS

It is nowhere said that Christians are to keep both the spirit and letter of the Ten Commandments. If it were so stated, we would be under that law as were the Jews, who although bound by their covenant to keep every jot and tittle of the law, could do no more than to observe the spirit of the law and to endeavor to keep, so far as possible, the letter also.

Christians are under grace; for they are sons of God by adoption. A son has many privileges which a servant does not have. To illustrate: Suppose we had been adopted into a millionaire's family. Upon going to the new home, as we look around we notice certain inscriptions over doorways; as, for instance, "Servants' Entrance," "Tradesmen's Entrance," "Servants' Washroom," "Servants' Quarters," etc. Upon further observation we discover various rules put up, regulating the duties and affairs of the servants in general. These we read, and thereby gain information as to the will of our kind friend. We ask ourself, "Do I come under this classification? No, for I have been adopted into the family. These are not for me. Yet from these instructions I perceive something of the law of the house, but I have duties and privileges far beyond those of a servant; I am a son and have privileges corresponding thereto."

So, the apostle says, God deals with us as with sons. He has not given us the Ten Commandments. Why not? It would be an insult to give us his Spirit, his mind, etc., and yet put us under a command which would imply that we had not received his Spirit. It would be quite inconsistent to say to a new creature, "Do not steal, do not commit murder." The new creature would not want to steal or to murder. The more we know about the law given to Israel the more we appreciate it, the better we comprehend the divine standpoint for everything. So while we may get some good out of that law given to servants, we realize that it is not a command given to us, although it gives us some idea of what a son should do. Those commands should make us know better what is the Father's will; and thus we are better able to do that will.

In proportion as we learn to appreciate the Father's will and to copy the principles underlying the divine character, we as new creatures are "changed" from glory to glory of heart quality. And thus changed in our hearts, our minds, our wills, our conduct, we become fit or "meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light."—Col. 1:12.

"YE ARE NOT UNDER THE LAW, BUT UNDER GRACE"

God has one law only for his intelligent creatures. This law, therefore, in whatever form it may be stated, whether more elaborate or more condensed, is applicable to angels, to men and to the new creation. There is no higher law and there could be none.

This law is based on justice, and finds expression in Deut. 6:5; Matt. 22:37-40; Lev. 19:18. It would not be reasonable to demand that one should do more for another than for himself. To do so may be invited; it may be suggested to us; but there would never be a command that a man should do more for another than for himself; for such a command would be unjust. Thus we differentiate between justice and love. "Love is the fulfilling of the law" (Rom. 13:10), and might go much further than would justice. In the case of the church, however, there is a special proposition made—not merely that we shall love, but that we shall love on the highest plane of life.

A HIGHER COMMANDMENT

The consideration set before Jesus and before his followers for carrying out this proposition is glory, honor and immortality—the divine nature; and for this joy we have engaged, not only to keep the law, but additionally to seek to have love beyond the commandments of the law. Under this arrangement we have agreed to do more than to love our neighbors as ourselves. We have agreed to lay down our lives for the brethren. This is a special requirement, which could not be expected from anyone aside from sacrifice.

Our relationship with the Lord is under this special covenant of sacrifice, as expressed in the words, "Gather my saints together unto me; those that have made a covenant with me by sacrifice." (Psa. 50:5.) These, the apostle tells us, are not without law, but are under law in Christ. This law in Christ is the law of their covenant, which is the law of love. A sacrificing love being beyond any requirement of justice, it necessarily follows that anything which they would do beyond the requirement of love would also fulfill the requirements of the law laid down by justice—the lesser being comprehended in the greater. This law of love would be a still higher law; as Jesus expressed it, "A new commandment (a higher commandment) I give unto you, that ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another"—John 13:34.

When the apostle says, "Ye are not under the law, but under grace," he probably has special reference to the fact that Christians who had come from among the Gentiles had never been under the law arrangement, but that their first experience under the law was under this Grace arrangement in Christ. However, in the case of the Jews who had been under the Law Covenant, he declares that they were freed from the law to which they had been bound; and he speaks as if the law was a very severe requirement which they had been unable to keep, and from which release was a great blessing. The Law Covenant proposed everlasting life upon the terms of keeping the law. "This do, and thou shalt live."—Lev. 18:5; Rom. 10:5; Luke 10:28.

Since all the Jews, like the rest of mankind, were imperfect because of the fall, therefore no Jew could keep that law, and consequently no Jew could ever attain everlasting life. Being unable to keep the law he could not get a reward. But he was really bound by that covenant; for there was no other covenant offered to him up to the time when the Gospel was offered. Then, for him, a special arrangement was made—a covenant of sacrifice. He was freed from the Law Covenant in the sense that he was released from the law.

By becoming dead to the law the Jews had an opportunity to get life in another way. By abandoning all hopes of getting everlasting life through the law, they could receive a new hope in Christ; namely, that under the arrangement in Christ, the great Advocate, they might have fellowship with him now in his suffering and later in his glory, which, by the Father's arrangement, he will share with all those who become his followers.

From the time, then, that the Jews became dead to the law, by abondoning all hope of getting life by obedience to it, he came into this one hope, which could be attained only through sacrifice. But he was still bound to do what is right. But this arrangement to do what is right is for the new creature, not for the old creature, which is reckoned dead. The new creature, however, has purposed to do God's law and more. Such sacrifice all earthly hopes. So of these it is said, "Old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new!" (2 Cor. 5:17.) They are no longer under the Law Covenant, but under the arrangement of grace, or God's favor.

It is a great privilege to offer ourselves in sacrifice and to get so great a reward in return. This is a great favor under grace. But there is another sense in which we are under grace; namely, the arrangement was made not only by which we get a

reward for doing so little, but by which our sacrifice is made acceptable. This also is grace. Grace means what the Lord does for us freely, not as a reward of any kind.

What our Lord does for us is to make our sacrifice acceptable. Then grace still pursues us and grants us blessings all the way; for, having undertaken to follow Jesus, we could not carry out our sacrifice. We find it impossible to do things perfectly, because we have imperfect bodies. But through the arrangement made for us in Christ, these imperfections will be forgiven. In order that these may be forgiven, it is necessary that we come with courage to the throne of heavenly grace that we may obtain help in time of need.—Heb. 4:16.

A REWARD IS NOT OF GRACE

So then we see three things: First, that there is a law higher than justice, a law of love, a law of sacrifice; second, that God proffers us a reward for walking in the footsteps of Jesus, sacrificing self even unto death; and third, that he covers our unwilling imperfections by the Robe of Christ's Righteousness, in order that we may perform acceptably our part of the contract.

Now, a reward is not of grace. If we offer a man $5 for doing a certain piece of work, we should not say after the work is done, "This is a matter of grace, and we will not give you the $5, but $1." To do so would not be right. To pay what we agreed to give is a matter of justice. So, then, it was grace to offer a reward for walking in the footsteps of Christ Jesus. But once the offer has been made, it becomes an obligation. It is a contract; it is a covenant, of sacrifice on our part, of reward on God's part. Jesus said, "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame and am set down with my Father in his throne." To give the reward after the terms have been complied with, will not be grace, but justice.

Again, grace provides the Redeemer's sacrifice on our behalf —not only for our original sin, but for all trespasses on the way. When the apostle says that the righteousness of the law is fulfilled in us, he is not speaking of the church as under that Law Covenant; but he is saying that while the Jews could not keep that law because of the imperfections of their flesh, yet the church keeps that law, for it does not apply to our flesh, but to our spirit. Hence, the ability to keep that law we, as old creatures, do not have; and we could not thus keep the law any more than they. But we as new creatures should be accounted as not only keeping that law, but as keeping the law of sacrifice.

The little flock will keep the law of sacrifice. The great company will keep the law in the spirit of their minds; but failing to do more they will lose the great reward of glory and honor. So, then, those of the consecrated who keep the law of love, the law of sacrifice, will be accounted as worthy of glory and honor with Christ Jesus. And those who fail to keep this law of sacrifice, but who maintain the law of justice, will finally be accounted worthy of everlasting life, but not of immortality.

THE LIFE-RIGHTS OF THE ANCIENT WORTHIES

Right to life is one thing, but right to eternal life is another. Adam had the right to live, which would have been eternal if by obedience, he had demonstrated his worthiness to live forever. So with the ancient worthies; when raised from the dead they will have the right to live, but only through the Mediator. They will not have life-rights of their own, for there are no such rights except those which are recognized by the Father and justice. The Apostle Paul tells us that already the ancient worthies have the divine approval. But although they pleased God, he did not give them eternal life; and although they shall please the Mediator, he will not turn them over to the Father, to justice, until the end of the Millennial age.

The Scriptures say also that all live unto God (Luke 20:38), for from his standpoint they only sleep. (See Deut. 31:16; John 11:11, etc.) Not the ancient worthies alone, but the rest of the world live unto God in the same sense, although they were not counted acceptable to him. He has made provision for them through the Mediator, but that provision will not be complete until the end of the Millennial age. The ancient worthies, approved of God, had this testimony, that they "pleased God," in that they came up to the standard—perfection of heart-intention and obedience to the extent of ability. While he approved them, nevertheless they did not have eternal life given them nor was any right of eternal life recognized.

God has, however, made provision whereby all of Adam's race will be redeemed and have the opportunity of gaining eternal life. This provision will, of course, include not only the ancient worthies, but also the remainder of mankind.

LIFE THROUGH THE MEDIATOR

This arrangement made by God is not, however, outside of the Mediator, for through the Mediator alone will mankind, including the ancient worthies, obtain eternal life. (The only exception to this provision of the Mediator is the church class, who come to the Father through Christ's acting as their Advocate.) Hence the ancient worthies cannot come by any different route. They must be recognized of the Father through the Mediator; for since they are not joint-heirs with Christ, they must come in under the other class, during the period in which the Mediator will deal with the world as a whole. The process of dealing with the world as a whole will go on, and not until the end of the Millennium will the Christ deliver any of them over to the Father.

The Lord Jehovah has made a plan by which he can, through his Son deal with mankind. That plan is that "The Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the son." (John 5:22) Hence the Father, aside from his Son, did not judge the ancient worthies. But they may expect a blessing in God's own time and season—in "due time"—when Messiah will have taken his power and begun his reign; and particularly at the end of that reign, when the Son shall have delivered up the kingdom to the Father.—1 Cor. 15:24.

The Father is not taking any cognizance of this arrangement for the blessing of the world, but is leaving it all for the great Messiah, who will be their Mediator, their great High Priest, making reconciliation, mediation. When the mediation, arranged for from before the foundation of the world, shall have been accomplished, it will be satisfactory to the ancient worthies, who will have been "rulers in all the earth," and to mankind as a whole.

ANCIENT WORTHIES UNDER THE MEDIATOR

The question as to whether the ancient worthies will have life-rights when they come forth, may be viewed from different standpoints. According to the teachings of the Scriptures, whoever is perfect is worthy of eternal life. We understand the Scriptures to teach that the ancient worthies will come forth from the tomb perfect, lacking nothing. We would be inclined to say, then, that being perfect they would come within the divine arrangement that whoever is perfect shall live. But we must remember that God is the Judge of all. (Heb. 12:23.) Yet, even so far as the ancient worthies are concerned, they will not have direct dealings with God during the Millennial age. Personally, they will be ready thus to deal; but God in his wisdom has seen fit to deal with them through the Redeemer, the Prophet or Teacher, the Priest, the Mediator of the whole world of mankind. And since the whole world of mankind is not ready to be turned over to the Father, the ancient worthies must wait until the remainder are delivered over into the hands of the Father, the Great Judge of all.

At the end of the Millennium, the whole world of perfected humanity will be turned over to the Father. (1 Cor. 15:24.) As soon as he accepts them they will stand in the same position in which Adam stood when he was perfect. But as Adam was required to be tested, so the whole world of mankind will be tested in the same condition of perfection in which Adam was. Divine justice must test their worthiness of life eternal before it will be granted.

SECOND RANK IN THE WORK OF SALVATION

The various statements regarding the ancient worthies all give the impression that, by their voluntary course, they reached the point where they were pleasing to God. And the Apostle Paul declares that these ancient worthies all died in faith, not having received the blessing of eternal life, because God had some better thing for us, the church, that they without us should not be made perfect. (Heb. 11:13, 39, 40.) In other words, while they had the testimony that they pleased God, they are not to have first rank, but second, in the work of salvation. They could not receive their blessing, their perfection, until, in the outworking of the divine plan, Messiah has taken his kingdom and his bride has been perfected. Then they shall have their restitution blessings.

The fact that the apostle says also that the ancient worthies desired "a better resurrection," implies that the resurrection given to them will be better than that given to the remainder of mankind, in that they will be worthy of having perfection of life at the time of first coming forth from the tomb, while

the resurrection of the others will be gradual after they come forth. "Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and all the prophets"—all the ancient worthies—will be awakened from death fully restored to human perfection; and will not require a "resurrection by judgment," a thousand years long, as will the residue of mankind.

The ancient worthies will come back in exactly the same condition that Adam was before the fall; but they will have the advantage of greater experience than he had. Adam was perfect; these will be perfect. Adam had no experience with sin; these will have had much experience with sin. These experiences tended to develop character; that is to say, they brought about a favorable determination in respect to righteousness; the testing that came to them was to demonstrate their obedience to God, their loyalty to his will. To maintain this loyalty many of them laid down their lives.

While these ancient worthies will have neither part nor lot in the spiritual kingdom, because not called thereto—that high, or "heavenly calling" not being possible until after the ransom had been laid down by our Lord Jesus—yet they will occupy a position of preferment above the world, having attested their faith and love during the reign of evil, in a manner approved of God. Thus they were prepared and proved worthy to be the earthly ministers and representatives of the spiritual kingdom. In harmony with this it is written by the Prophet David, as addressed to The Christ—"Instead of [being longer considered] thy fathers [they] shall be thy children, whom thou mayest make princes [chief ones, captains] in all the earth."—Psa. 45:16.

The resurrection of these ancient worthies will also be "better" than that of the remainder of mankind in that they were tried severely during their life and received a "good report through faith," and will have attained the reward of that faithfulness. They will be perfect men, having completely restored to them all that was lost in Adam—mental and moral likeness to God, and perfection of physical powers.

ELEMENTS OF CHARACTER-DEVELOPMENT

If these worthies of the past have had large experience with sin and have proved themselves faithful in that they remained loyal to God, even unto death, why should they not receive life-rights as well as perfection of life at once? Why should they be obliged to wait until the end of the Millennial age for recognition by Jehovah, instead of receiving it at the beginning? The answer is that God has included the whole world in the Mediatorial work of Messiah, as he has included all the church in the preparatory work of the royal priesthood, through the great Advocate, the Redeemer; and the Mediator's work will continue for a thousand years. Hence, all who come under that work will be obliged to wait for the end of that epoch before the recognition of any of them will be effected.

The ancient worthies "had this testimony that they pleased God." They pleased him in that when they ascertained his will they set about doing it, even before he gave it to them as a law, obligation, even before he could ask them to obey him and promise them eternal life for their obedience. Abraham, one of these men, manifested his faith in God although there was no redemption yet accomplished in the world. Christ had not yet come. And although Abraham was not on trial for life or for death, God granted him his favor and declared that he pleased him. He and all those ancient worthies will have this resurrection to human perfection. But since human perfection—to the world of mankind—will come only under the Mediatorial reign of Christ, the ancient worthies cannot be introduced to the Father until the close of the Millennial age.

Hence they will not have life in its fullest sense until the time when at the close of the Millennial age the kingdom shall have been delivered over to the Father. What they will have in the meantime—during the thousand-year period—will be perfection of human nature and all the blessings that God provides for mankind through the great Mediator.

ESTABLISHED CHARACTER NECESSARY

If perfection of organism makes character, then Adam was perfect in this respect. He was created perfect in mind and body. His mind was in the image of God; no blemish was there, no preference for sin, but the reverse of this; he had an appreciation of righteousness and a tendency toward it; he was all that would constitute a good man, for God so made him.

In another sense, Adam never had perfect character; that is, he had no character developed, tested and proved. God tried him, and because of his inexperience he failed, even though his character was good and his organism perfect. He failed in the very first feature of his trial. So we might wonder in what manner the ancient worthies received the testing which would constitute a full proof of character. When we examine the records of these men we find that they manifested great faith, and that they endured some severe ordeals and testings of their loyalty to God and their confidence in him. It does not surprise us, then, that the testimony that they pleased God was given respecting them. This assures us that they had considerable character development. God must have seen their hearts to be very loyal, else he never would have considered them worthy of a better resurrection. Yet we believe they will have need of further experience and testing.

These ancient worthies will not be begotten of the holy Spirit, as is the church; but we are informed that "after those days" God will "pour his Spirit upon all flesh." (Joel 2:28; Acts 2:17.) The ancient worthies lived prior to the time of the outpouring of the holy Spirit, therefore, if they receive any measure of this blessing to come upon "all flesh," it must be in the future, and the giving of the holy Spirit to them will have much to do with fixing, establishing, crystallizing their already perfect characters. They will be brought to greater knowledge, and having already endured severe testings and having proved their thorough heart-loyalty, they will have to learn how to use their talents and powers in fullest conformity to the divine will.

While this class will be mortal and hence, liable to death, it is almost unthinkable that any of these would come short of eternal life. Men who have stood crucial tests under conditions of ignorance and superstition, who have endured temptation from the world, the flesh and the adversary, and proved loyal under such conditions, would, it is only reasonable to suppose, maintain their perfection under the more favorable conditions of the Millennial age.

It is not probable that they would make mistakes; but if, upon their awakening, they should be at once turned over to Jehovah, and, as in Adam's case, the slightest deflection would mean death, we can see that their position would be much less favorable than it will be under the New Covenant arrangement during the Millennial reign of Christ. This is a very gracious arrangement for their best interests, for any possible mistake would be covered by Christ's mediation and not bring them under sentence of death.

The history of some of these ancient worthies is very meager and does not always imply that they were "overcomers" in the sense in which the church is to be. Take, for example, the case of Samson, who is mentioned as one of the ancient worthies. The last we read of Samson, still in the hands of the Philistines, is that he was still loyal to God and prayed for the opportunity of serving God's cause; the Lord granted his prayer, permitting to push down the pillars of the building in which he was making sport for the Philistines; they were the middle pillars upon which the house stood, and in its fall more than three thousand of the enemies of the Israelites were killed along with himself.

Faith seems to have been the chief element of character that was developed under Samson's experiences. We do not know how much patience, long-suffering, brotherly kindness, gentleness, meekness, etc., were developed in his character; nothing is stated in regard to the matter and we have no reason to suppose that Samson was a very gentle man. Indeed, we have never thought of gentleness and meekness as being amongst his characteristics. The slaying of one thousand men with the jawbone of an ass, as well as other experiences of his, would not seem to indicate this.

We may reasonably suppose, therefore, that although Samson will be brought back in an absolutely perfect condition, and under the favorable environments of the Millennial age, there will probably be experiences in life that he never encountered and that will be so new to him that he might be in danger of making mistakes. Assuredly he will have much to learn respecting the things of the Spirit of God, in the days of the blessing of "all flesh."

Summing up, we would say, the ancient worthies will not come into actual and personal relationship to God, so as to be determined worthy of eternal life, until the completion of the Millennial age, because that age is set apart for the very purpose of determining who of all mankind may have eternal life—aside for the spirit-begotten ones of the present time. At the close of the Millennial age, when all mankind shall have reached perfection of being, they shall be tried of the Father for their worthiness or unworthiness of eternal life—just as Adam, while enjoying perfection, was tested as to whether or not he was worthy to have his life made perpetual.

Since the ancient worthies will be a part of the world under the New Covenant arrangement, it follows that they will not have the decision of the divine court, divine justice, respecting their worthiness of eternal life, until the completion of the Millennial age, until the conclusion of the trial at the end of that age, which will bring to them, as it will bring to all others who are faithful, the great reward of life eternal.

"BROUGHT DOWN TO HELL"

MATT. 11:20-30.—SEPTEMBER 15.

TEXT:—*"Come unto me, all that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."*—V. 28.

Today's study links well with the closing of our lesson of a week ago. We there heard Jesus say that it would be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrah, in the great judgment day of a thousand years, in which he will reign and give the world a full knowledge of God and a full opportunity of returning to him—more tolerable for the Sodomites than for some who have enjoyed greater privileges and rejected them.

Today's study tells of how our Lord upbraided the city where most of his mighty works had been done, because they repented not, because they did not note the power of God in their midst and gladly receive the message, the indications of divine favor. Such, Jesus declared, will be less prepared to appreciate the kingdom in the future than will some who have never known him. Tyre and Sidon, heathen cities, would have repented with far less preaching. It is but in harmony with divine justice, therefore, that when the great day of God's favor and of the Messianic kingdom shall dawn, the people of Tyre and Sidon shall have things still more favorable than the people of Chorazin and Bethsaida.

Capernaum, above all other cities of Palestine, was favored, because there our Lord did most of his miracles, and uttered more of his wonderful words of life than anywhere else. In this sense of the word Jesus declared that Capernaum had been exalted up to heaven—highly lifted up in point of privilege and divine favor and blessing. This being true, it meant that in justice Capernaum's fall would be proportionate. She would fall from the heights of heavenly privilege and favor down to hell—to the grave.

And today we find it difficult to locate that once great and beautiful city, so thoroughly has it been obliterated, brought down to dust. Hearken further to the reason for this denouncement: "If the mighty works which have been done in thee had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day; but I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment than for thee."

Let us not mistake the lesson: While only those who fully accept Christ and consecrate their lives to his service will receive the spirit-begetting, or any share in the heavenly kingdom, all the remainder of mankind who come to any knowledge of the Lord of his mercy and blessing, and who refrain from rendering homage and from striving to walk in God's way, will proportionately disadvantage themselves in respect to the future life and the great blessings and privileges and opportunities to be brought to all mankind through Messiah's kingdom and its reign of a thousand years.

"I THANK THEE, O FATHER"

It was in Jesus' day as it has ever since been, that not many of the great or rich or wise or learned had ears to hear the Gospel message. The difficulty with this class is that the things of the present life so fill and satisfy that they have no hungering for the better things. They have their consolation now, they have their pleasures now; they say, Soul, take thine ease now, look out for number one, and do not feel too much interest in or concern for other people and their troubles; there are millions of poor, groaning fellow-creatures, and if you stop to sympathize with them you will mar your own pleasure.

Thus it has been that the majority of the followers of Jesus in every age have been chiefly the poor of this world, rich in faith. There are two ways of viewing this matter. On the one hand we can rejoice with the poor and less influential who have received the Gospel message, that doubtless their poverty, etc., were favorable factors to their advantage. And, similarly, we can sympathize with the great and rich and learned, that their earthly blessings are blinding them to the still greater opportunities of this age, so that not many of them will be of the kingdom class—not many of them members of the bride company, joint-heirs with Jesus in his Messianic kingdom.

But hearken again to the words of Jesus—how peculiarly they read: "I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent and hast revealed them unto babes; even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight." How strangely those words once sounded to us, when we supposed that all who failed to receive the message of Jesus, all who failed to make their "calling and election sure" to membership in the bride class—all such would suffer some kind of an eternal torture!

How strange it seemed that Jesus should thank the Father that these things were hidden from some of the grandest and noblest and most brilliant of our race! We could not understand. But now, how clear! how plain! Jesus was preaching the kingdom, and all who rejected his preaching rejected the kingdom, and will lose it. This does not mean that they may not receive ultimately a blessing under that kingdom, when it shall rule the world, and when all that are in their graves shall come forth to receive those very blessings which Jesus died to procure for them—the blessings of a trial, or judgment of a thousand years, to determine whether they will be accounted worthy of everlasting life, or of everlasting death, destruction.

Now we see what Jesus intimated, namely, that there is a wisdom in God's course in this matter which is not apparent on the surface. Had those rich and great seen fully, distinctly, clearly the true situation, it would have increased their responsibility; their condemnation in not receiving and accepting Christ would have been greater. Besides, some of them, of strong character and determination, might have been impelled thereby to take a course of still more violent opposition than they did take; or, if they had known and seen the truth, it would have made them either opposers or defenders of it. If they had defended Christ, then he would not have been crucified, and the divine plan would not have been carried out; or, if they had intelligently permitted his crucifixion, they would have had a tenfold condemnation. St. Peter declares that the extenuating circumstances connected with our Lord's crucifixion was ignorance. He declared, speaking by inspiration at Pentecost, "If they had known, they would not have crucified the Prince of Life."

FEW KNOW THE FATHER OR THE SON

All men are to be brought to a knowledge of God. The Scriptures declare, "The knowledge of the glory of God shall fill the whole earth." Jesus declared that no one can know the Father except as first they come to know the Son, or as the Son reveals the Father to him. Hence those who have failed to recognize Jesus as the Son of God have not yet come to the full appreciation of their privileges. Blessed are our eyes, that now they see, our ears that now they hear, that we may know Messiah, and through him know the Father; and Jesus may come in to us and sup with us, and we with him.—Rev. 3:20.

We are glad that all mankind in due time will be brought to a clear knowledge and full opportunity. But oh, how much greater is our blessing, besides the privilege of now being the sons of God, joint-heirs in his glorious kingdom! We may well rejoice with the Lord in his thanks to the Father, not only that some cannot hear, see, or understand, but also that some of us can hear, see and understand the divine message now, and thus share its blessings.

The special call of God through Jesus, therefore, is to the poor, the broken-hearted, the heavy laden, the unsatisfied: "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn of me, for I am meek and lowly of heart, and ye shall find rest unto your souls, for my yoke is easy and my burden is light."

PREACHING THE KINGDOM

MATT. 9:35 TO 10:15.—SEPTEMBER 8.

TEXT:—*"He that receiveth you receiveth me, and he that receiveth me receiveth him that sent me."*—Matt. 10:40.

We have more about the kingdom in the study appointed for today. Not only did Jesus preach the kingdom, as our lesson says, but realizing that the harvest work of the Jewish age was great, he sent forth his twelve apostles two and two—to preach what? Hark: He said, "As you go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand."

As the Savior cast out devils and healed the sick, not with the view of doing a restitution work and general healing, but to allow the people to hear the message which he preached, and to illustrate the healing and restoring work which his kingdom will do in its appointed time, so also he gave the same power to his apostles, for the reason that he gave them the same message of the kingdom to proclaim.

He told them that the harvest was plenteous and that the laborers were few, and intimated that it was their privilege to note this fact and to be all the more energetic because of the great "field" and the few to reap it; but in the meantime to "pray the Lord of the harvest to send forth more laborers." That is to say, he wished them to feel a measure of responsibility in the work, even though he himself was the Lord of that harvest, and even though he was the responsible one. So the Master would have every one of us feel a deep interest in the

harvest work now in process, in the end of this age, and similarly to pray him for more laborers, in the similar proclamation, "The kingdom of heaven is at hand."

These messengers of the kingdom were not to go to the Gentiles, but merely to "the lost sheep of the house of Israel," said our Lord. Why? Did he not love the Gentiles. Was the Lord Jesus prejudiced so that he cared only for his own nationality? No; the answer is a different one. God's covenant promised the blessed privilege of the Messiahship to Abraham's seed. Jesus was the seed of Abraham in particular and the Messiah. But God had another feature in mind in connection with that Messiahship, of which Abraham did not know; namely, that he would have associated with Messiah in the kingdom others who would share his glory, honor and immortality. This blessed privilege, which Abraham could not have fully understood, God nevertheless fulfilled to Abraham's children, as fully as though he had particularly stipulated it in the promise. God would keep the very spirit of his engagement as well as its letter. Hence, no favor could go to the Gentiles until after natural Israel had received the opportunity and used it as far as they would.

HARVESTING THEN AND NOW

Another reason why the blessing should not have been given to the Gentiles was that it was to be a harvesting work, and not plowing, harrowing, nor sowing which had not been done with the Gentiles, but only with the Jews. It was appropriate, therefore, that the Harvest, which belonged to the Jews should be confined to them. What was done for the Gentiles was the seed-sowing, as represented in the parable of the Wheat and Tares.

But now we are in the harvest of the Gospel age. It is not the Jews that are being harvested now, nor the heathen, nor the world in general. The reaping is to be done amongst those who have received the seed-sowing—the reaping work belongs to Christendom—to whatever part of mankind the Gospel message has been made known and wherever received and professed. This, therefore, is an intimation to us that the Lord would now have the harvesting done chiefly amongst those who profess to be his people, nominal spiritual Israel. The trumpet is to be blown in Zion, to awaken those who are at ease in Zion.

Jesus specially instructed the reapers of that harvest that they should go forth fully trusting to divine providence. They were not commissioned to beg nor to take up collections, so far as the records show. They assumed therefore that they were merely to accept what might be voluntarily tendered. If they were not hospitably received they were to consider it the Lord's will that they should go elsewhere. They were sent to search out the worthy ones; they should keep this in mind. In going from house to house, a prayer should be in their hearts, if not upon their lips, that if there were worthy ones there the peace of God, and their peace, might be there. If not, they were to take their blessing with them to bestow it upon those more worthy, as they should find them. "Whoever will not receive you and hear your words, when you depart out of that house," or out of that city, "shake off the dust from your feet."

"MORE TOLERABLE FOR SODOM"

Jesus declared that in the day of judgment it will be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrah than for the city refusing to receive his representatives. What does that mean—"more tolerable?" It implies that the treatment will be tolerable in any event. But why more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrah and others in the day of judgment?

It was Jesus' declaration that, aside from a saintly few who received his message gladly, the remainder of the people of that time were more hardened and more blameworthy in God's sight than were the people of Sodom and Gomorrah, whose sin was of a different kind. Let us notice that feature. The sins of Sodom were certainly grievous in the sight of God and all good people. But, think of it! the sin of carelessness in respect to the glorious message of the kingdom is in God's sight an indication of a still meaner condition of heart of a still more wicked person, one of whom there is less hope of an eventual salvation.

The Sodomites mentioned by Jesus were not so illuminated as those living in his day, yet he declares, "Fire rained down from heaven and destroyed them all." (Luke 17:29.) And that took place nearly twenty-five centuries before Jesus' birth, yet he declares that those Sodomites had not up to that time been judged—their judgment was still future; and, "in the day of judgment, it will be more tolerable" for them than the people of Bethsaida and Chorazin. Sodom sinned grievously, but they had little light, practically no knowledge of God.

THE DAY OF JUDGMENT

But why should the Sodomites have a day of judgment at all? Were they not judged, condemned and destroyed? Oh, yes; but then, all men, Adam and all of his race, were judged and condemned. Those Sodomites were condemned to death before they were born, as are all of Adam's children—born in sin, "shapen in iniquity." The death penalty which came upon Adam reached to them as it has reached to us. The only thing that came upon the Sodomites specially, in addition to what comes upon all mankind, was that they died violent deaths, probably accompanied by great sufferings.

In this blotting out as a divine punishment, the apostle tells us, they were made an example of the ultimate doom that will come upon all who reject God's grace and die the second death. (2 Pet. 2:6.) However, the Sodomites and all of Adam's posterity are included in the redemption work of Jesus. Hence they are no more dead than Abraham, but merely sleeping with their fathers, as Abraham sleeps with his fathers, waiting the glorious morning, when the Redeemer of Adam and his race shall take to himself his great power, shall establish his kingdom, bind Satan, glorify his church, and begin his work of blessing the world.

The world's blessing will consist of an awakening from the tomb, and there will be an opportunity to the Sodomites, as well as the people in Jesus' day, to rise out of their sinful and fallen condition, and, if they will, to return to full harmony with God and have everlasting life. In that glorious judgment day of a thousand years (2 Pet. 3:7, 8) the Sodomites will find it easier to make progress than will those who repudiated the message of Jesus and the apostles. However fallen and degraded the Sodomites were in some respects, their hearts and consciences were less seared than those who refused God's message.

TORONTO AND WASHINGTON CONVENTION

Nearly one thousand of those of "like precious faith" assembled in convention at the National Exhibition Park, Toronto, Ont., Canada, beginning Sunday, June 30. The weather was ideal for such an occasion, and the spirt of the friends indicated their joy in the Lord, their oneness of purpose and implicit faith in the great Creator of the Universe. Those in attendance were mostly from Canada, although quite a number were present from the United States.

Horticultural Hall proved to be a splendid convention auditorium, having a capacity of about fifteen hundred. The friends were quite comfortably lodged in the vicinity of the park, and a substantial luncheon was provided each noon, affording at the same time an excellent opportunity for sociability and Christian fellowship. The Exhibition Park is located on the lake front with a magnificent view of the water, and is artistically laid out with winding paths, fountain sprays and flower beds.

With such beautiful surroundings praise to the Almighty filled every heart from the very first and the opening day of services was appropriately designated "Praise day." The speakers of the day magnified the name of the Lord and forcefully depicted the divine program. "Hope day," "Kingdom day" and "Fruitage day" each in turn proved equally interesting and helpful to the assembled Bible Students as they had further word pictures painted before their mental vision illustrating God's wonderful provision for all mankind, and the special favors in reservation for the members of "the church of the first-born."

At one of these sessions a resolution was unanimously adopted expressing the sense of the convention "that we do not find the Bible to teach the doctrines of a literal hell fire, or place of fire and brimstone, for the punishment of the wicked, but that secular history of the formation of the creeds of the Middle ages reveals the fact that for various reasons, either wisely or unwisely, the doctrine of punishment in hell fire was added to the Gospel as taught by Jesus and the twelve apostles. We, therefore, now unreservedly repudiate as thoroughly unscriptural the teaching of a place, state or condition of a literal lake of fire and brimstone for the punishment of the wicked, and further, that we believe from many personal testimonials that the vast majority of ministers of all Protestant denominations have privately repudiated the 'hell fire' theory, but have for supposedly good reasons, hesitated to inform their congregations; and further, that we believe, on this account thousands, and perhaps tens of thousands, are being driven into skepticism or infidelity. We appeal to every minister in the Dominion of Canada to publish in his local newspaper, over his own signature, a statement declaring whether or

not he believes the Bible to teach the doctrine of a literal lake of fire and brimstone, and ask every editor to invite the ministers of his constituency to avail themselves of his columns for their statement."

On Thursday, "Fruition day," Brother Russell arrived in the afternoon and found the convention at its height; and on Friday, "Harvester day," the enthusiasm and zeal seemed, if anything, to excel any former occasion. We trust that many of the harvesters were encouraged to renewed activity in the Lord's service for the ensuing year, and, too, that others may have received an incentive to enter into some department of the grand harvest work. The prevailing sentiment seemed to be expressed in the words of our Master during that other great harvest period eighteen centuries ago—"The harvest truly is plenteous, but the laborers are few; pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth laborers into his harvest."

Saturday was designated "Spirit Begetting day." At the conclusion of the morning praise and testimony service Brother Russell addressed the convention on "Baptism—Its Import and Its Symbol." This was followed by an immersion service at the lake, where 97 adults symbolized their full consecration unto death. The convention proper, according to program, concluded on Saturday afternoon with a love feast. The elders of the Toronto class, all the pilgrim brethren present, and Brother Russell, enjoyed the blessed privilege of a personal hand-shake with each and all in attendance. The singing of appropriate farewell hymns and the breaking of bread made the scene most impressive, never to be forgotten.

Although not on the program, on Sunday morning a large number of the friends gathered again at Horticultural Hall for a praise and testimony service and an address by one of the Canadian brethren, followed by a Berean lesson. In the afternoon the public of Toronto were addressed by Brother Russell in the Royal Alexandra Theatre on the subject, "Beyond the Grave." The meeting was well advertised, and although this is a large auditorium, and the day was exceedingly warm, the place was crowded to its capacity and, according to various estimates, five hundred to one thousand were turned away from the doors unable to gain admittance. The witness to the truth, God's character and plan thus given, we trust, may serve to awaken the interest of some who heard for the first time. Closest attention was given.

AT WASHINGTON CITY

While the concluding sessions were being held at Toronto, Ontario, Bible Students from thirty-six different States were entering the Capitol City of the United States by the gateway of its magnificent Union Station, previously mentioned in the columns of this journal on account of the appropriate inscriptions of Biblical texts so precious to the hearts of our readers, to be found above the archway entrances, viz., "Thou hast put all things under his feet;" "The truth shall make you free"; "The desert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose," etc.

Via special trains, special cars, electric lines and automobiles the friends continued to pour in until by Saturday evening, the day before the convention opened, the city was fairly filled with Bible Students, who were assigned to over six hundred different homes, private boarding house and hotels. This distribution of the visiting Students, we believe, afforded an excellent opportunity for witnessing the truth before many families and persons who might not otherwise have been reached. So far as we have heard all were quite comfortably located.

The opening day's sessions were all held in the auditorium at the Glen Echo Chautauqua Grounds, and in spite of the extreme heat the place was filled to overflowing. Observing the extraordinary numbers in attendance, which more than taxed the capacity of Glen Echo Park and the electric car facilities, the committee on arrangements concluded that it would be best to transfer the majority of the meetings to Washington City proper. Accordingly, on Monday morning the Washington Academy of Music, a fine auditorium with a seating capacity of about 2,500 persons, was secured, and at 9 o'clock on Tuesday morning the same was packed to its limit, with about 300 on the platform. This necessitated the securing of another auditorium for overflow services, which were arranged for in the beautiful new Masonic Temple, seating about 1,400 people Besides these two places the G. A. R. Hall was engaged for book stall, colporteur department, postoffice, information bureau and a general meeting place for those who desired to make appointments with one another.

We believe we can see the overruling hand of Providence in having these auditoriums, as they served to bring before the attention of the public the actual size of the gathering of Bible Students. It was a surprise to many of the Washington residents to know that there were so many people so interested in Bible study as not to give their time to sight-seeing or other attractions of that beautiful city, but on the contrary would pour into each of the auditoriums at each session, morning, afternoon and evening, notwithstanding the heated weather.

Besides the regular features, as designated on the program, a reception was held in the G. A. R. Hall on Monday evening, attended by six hundred. Another reception, in the nature of a special discourse by Brother Russell, was held on Tuesday evening in the Academy of Music, which was crowded to its capacity. On Wednesday night a most inspiring prayer meeting, attended by fully 2,500 persons, was conducted at the Academy of Music. The testimonies all evidenced remarkable growth in grace and in knowledge of the Lord and a desire to "praise him for his goodness and wonderful works to the children of men."—Psa. 107:8.

Another feature not on the regular program was the "Christian Workers' Service" on Thursday afternoon at the Glen Echo auditorium, over one thousand being present. The discourse by Brother Russell on the subject of Baptism on Friday morning was listened to with quiet interest, and at its conclusion 167 adults indicated their desire to symbolize their baptism into the body of Christ by water immersion. After directing a few personal words and extending the right-hand of fellowship to each of the candidate, they were conducted to the bathing pool at the foot of the imposing Washington Monument, where the ceremony was performed with befitting dignity and solemnity.

In the evening Brother Russell addressed a splendid assembly of Pilgrims, elders and deacons at the Academy of Music, and all seemed greatly rejoiced, comforted and encouraged by the remarks, which were based upon the text, Acts 20:28.

Harvesters' day, with its usual enthusiasm, brought together the active colporteur workers to learn more about the wonderful privileges of the season in which we are living. The Master's words, as recorded by St. John, seem best to express the sentiments of this blessed day at the convention: "Jesus saith unto them, My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work. Say not ye, There are yet four months, and then cometh the harvest? Behold, I say unto you, Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest. And he that reapeth receiveth wages, and gathereth fruit unto life eternal; that both he that soweth and he that reapeth may rejoice together."—John 4:34-36.

At one of the early sessions of the convention a similar resolution to that passed at the Toronto convention, repudiating the doctrine of the dark ages—the eternal torture of nearly all mankind—was presented and carried unanimously by the Bible Students gathered at Glen Echo. Already we learn of considerable discussion having been agitated amongst the various clergymen in all parts of the country.

Holiness day concluded this last, and we must again say, "the best yet" of all our conventions. On account of the great numbers in attendance the usual custom of breaking bread and shaking hands with all the pilgrims and Brother Russell was not deemed practical, but instead the pilgrim brethren and Brother Russell were stationed at the various points of exit of the Academy of Music and bade the friends farewell while they sang, "Blest Be the Tie That Binds," "God Be With You Till We Meet Again," and other hymns of similar sentiment. As this leave-taking was in progress many eyes glistened with tears of mingled sorrow and joy while we said farewell to one another and "God bless you." Let us hope to meet again in the great convention on high, where we surely shall be if faithful to him who hath called us out of darkness into his marvelous light."

MORE BEREAN QUESTION BOOKLETS

We are pleased to inform our readers that Question Booklets are in stock for Volumes I, II, III, IV. and V. of STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES, also for TABERNACLE SHADOWS. Price 5c each—50c per dozen, postpaid, brings them within the reach of all. Order freely according to your needs.

Many of the classes find these questions very helpful. The difficulty with many classes in the past has been that not every one has the teaching ability to draw the information of the lessons from the class. The successful class leader has little to say except as he sums up the answer to each question after it has been discussed by the class; or, if the question be not understood by the class, he may often render assistance by paraphrasing it and, if possible, simplifying it.

Excellent as public preaching is we believe that the Lord's people learn more in Berean classes than by listening to any sermon. Thought is stimulated, quickened.

SCRIPTURAL USAGE OF THE TERM SALVATION

Higher critics and evolutionists have much trouble in their endeavor to hide from the common people the fact that their theories are diametrically opposed to all the teachings of the Scriptures respecting human salvation. These latter-day philosophers do not like to be called "infidels" "unbelievers," but prefer to take their texts from the Bible in their weekly endeavor to undermine faith. If evolution theories were true, the word "salvation" would be wholly inappropriate. If mankind have been climbing upward for six thousand years, out of monkeyhood into perfect manhood, and if they are gradually to become angels by processes of evolution, then the word "salvation" is altogether out of place when applied to them. They should rather be let alone in their glorious upward progress. They would need no Savior, or Redeemer; for according to this theory, mankind never was lost—never fell from perfection.

But the Bible proposition is the very reverse of the evolution theory. The Scriptures teaches that man was created perfect and holy, in the moral likeness of his Maker. It declares that when on trial to determine whether or not his life and favors might be continued to him everlastingly, Adam sinned and was sentenced to death. It tells that through Jesus, God has made a provision for the recovery of mankind out of the sin and death condition into which he fell; that the work of Jesus primarily is that of the satisfaction of justice; that he died, the just for the unjust, and that sinners are to be reconciled to God through the death of his Son. The Bible teaches that this redemptive process, this salvation of mankind from sin and death, has already begun in that Christ has already given his life a ransom-price, and has been exalted and declared to be the Savior, the Life-giver of the world.

But the world has not yet been saved. It lies in the wicked one. Satan is still the "prince of this world." Sin and death reign. The world has only the divine promise which was given to Abraham, but of which the majority of mankind do not even know. That promise, however, is sure—that eventually all the families of the earth shall be blessed by Messiah; and that to effect this salvation Messiah in due time will set up a glorious reign of righteousness, the kingdom of God under the whole heavens. It shall rule; it shall conquer; it shall destroy sin, death and everything opposed to divine righteousness and to the best interests of mankind. Thus eventually the knowledge of the Lord shall be made to fill the whole earth (Isa. 11:9), and every knee shall bow and every tongue confess the Lord. (Isa. 45:23.) Thus shall come the glorious opportunity for salvation through the knowledge of the Lord, and his will.—Jer. 31:34.

Those who desire to do God's will shall be assisted by the Redeemer, thus to cultivate a righteous character. That assistance will include an uplifting out of, or saving from, sin and death and all the terrible associations of mental, moral and physical imperfections. That salvation will be to life, health and strength—mental, moral and physical. The earth also shall be saved—recovered from the divine sentence, or "curse." No longer will thorns and thistles cause sweat of face; but the earth shall yield her increase and be styled, "The garden of the Lord." (Zech. 8:12; Isa. 51:3.) The earth is God's footstool, which he will make glorious.—Isa 60:13.

But that salvation of man and of his earthly home and future dominion is preceded by another phase, or kind, of salvation. Before dealing with the world, God elects, calls, draws, instructs a saintly class. These by faith may now speak of themselves as saved, although their salvation will not really be accomplished until they share in the first resurrection. Now they reckon themselves as passed from death unto life, as new creatures, brethren of Christ, children of God. Into all this glorious condition the saintly ones will enter with their resurrection change, experiencing a transfer from human nature and conditions to spirit (heavenly) nature and conditions.

Thus, eventually, there will be two classes of saved ones—two classes saved out of the sin and death conditions which now prevail:

(1) The church changed from earthly to divine nature.—1 Cor. 15:51-54.

(2) The willing and obedient of the world, who, during the thousand years of Messiah's glorious reign, will be gradually changed, not to a different nature, but from the imperfection to the perfection of human nature.—Acts. 3:19-21.

Meantime all the wilfully wicked, disobedient or rebellious will be utterly destroyed in the "second death," "as natural brute beasts."—2 Pet. 2:12.

SOME INTERESTING QUESTIONS

QUESTIONS RE THE REDEEMER

Question (1) At what period in Jesus' life was he a perfect man?

Answer.—He was always perfect, but did notbecome the perfect man until the 30th year of his life. In the very beginning, "the beginning of the creation of God" (Rev. 3:14), he was sinless, perfect on the spirit plane—next to the heavenly Father. When he humbled himself, in harmony with the divine plan and in order that he might be man's Redeemer and Restorer, he still maintained his perfection, his sinlessness. When born of the virgin, he was still "holy, harmless, undefiled and separate from sinners." He was the perfect babe. As he grew to manhood his perfection was maintained—he was the perfect boy, the perfect youth and finally the perfect man. Thus we read, "Jesus increased in wisdom and stature and in favor with God and man."

Question (2) Was Jesus, at the time of attaining the perfection of manhood, possessed of everlasting life, or was it necessary for him to be placed on trial as a perfect man before he would be accounted worthy of everlasting life?

Answer.—According to the divine law, under which Jesus was born into the world, his perfection proved his worthiness of everlasting life, just as Adam's perfection meant everlasting life to him. But as Adam, who when created was in covenant relationship with God, by disobedience, by breaking the covenant, lost the right to life which was his by that divine covenant, so Jesus, as a perfect man, was in covenant-relationship with God, and as a human being could have forfeited his right to life only by sin or, otherwise, have disposed of it by sacrifice—the latter of which he did.

Question (3) Was Jesus at the age of thirty years qualified to give himself a ransom-price for Adam and his race, or was it necessary that first he should have a personal trial, or testing, in respect to his loyalty to God before his sacrifice could be accepted as the ransom-price for Adam and his race?

Answer.—Jesus was at thirty years of age qualified and competent to present his body a "living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God," as man's ransom-price—and this he did. God accepted the offering and sacrifice and signified his acceptance of it by the anointing of the holy Spirit, by which he begat Jesus again, this time to the divine nature as a reward for the obedient sacrifice of that which he had consecrated unto death.

Nevertheless, the necessity for a testing of one who would become man's substitute was not overlooked in the divine arrangement. Two tests, or trials, proceeded at the same time, and both were necessary. As a man he must prove loyal to the principles of righteousness represented in the divine law, otherwise he could not be a suitable substitute or ransomer for Adam and his family. On his own account, to prove himself worthy of the divine nature, Jesus needed to have trials as a new creature. His begetting of the holy spirit could reach the fruition of divine nature only by his faithfully carrying out his covenant or sacrifice. Hence, if he had failed to perform the sacrifice as he covenanted, he would have failed entirely, and would not have received the great reward of divine glory, honor and immortality which came to him in his resurrection.

St. Paul declares, "Wherefore, God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name." (Phil. 2:9) The entire test of our Lord Jesus was along the lines of his faithfully sacrificing himself, in the doing of the Father's will—in submitting to all things "written in the Book"—in the prophecies and in the types of the law. Had he failed to keep his covenant of sacrifice, not only would he have failed to gain the exaltation to divine nature, but he would have lost everything—even life itself.

But the keeping of his covenant of sacrifice, obligatory upon our Lord as a new creature, meant also that he kept the law, obligatory upon him as a human being because the things required of him under his covenant were in harmony with the law. To keep his covenant meant that he should keep the law, and much more than that—to sacrifice his rights and interests which the law did not demand should be sacrificed.

Question (4)—If Jesus had kept the law blamelessly, yet had failed in some feature of his covenant of sacrifice, what would have been the status of human redemption? Would the ransom-price of humanity have been paid by Jesus' keeping the law perfectly, even though he had failed in obedience to his covenant of sacrifice, and thus failed to attain to glory, honor and immortality—the divine plane? If not, why not?

Answer.—Under the circumstances mentioned in the above question, the entire matter of redemption would have failed, so far as Jesus was concerned. His death would not have ransomed man from the death penalty. Indeed, the question presupposes an entirely wrong view of the ransom. Jesus' death

was a ransom-sacrifice. That is to say it was a sacrificial death intended to effect the ransom of Adam and all lost through his disobedience. But a ransom sacrifice is one thing, and the payment of the ransom-price is quite another thing. For instance: Jesus did his work perfectly; it had the divine approval; the ransom-price was laid down and was satisfactory to the Father, and Jesus has been rewarded for his loyalty and obedience manifested in that ransom-sacrifice; but the value of that sacrifice, quite sufficient to be the off-set, or satisfaction, for the sins of the whole world, has not yet been applied.

The merit of that sacrifice is in the hands of divine justice, subject to application for the sins of the whole world as soon as God's time shall have arrived. But that time has not quite yet arrived, and the world is still not redeemed, even in a judicial sense. Hence we read, "The whole world lieth in wickedness" and are all "children of wrath." (1 John 5:19; Eph. 2:3.) If the ransom-price had been applied and accepted, the world would not lie in the hands of the wicked one, and would no longer be "children of wrath."

Before the merit of Jesus' sacrifice can be applied as a ransom-price for the world's sins—to secure the world's release from divine condemnation, and the turning over of the world to Jesus and the establishment of his kingdom for its blessing—before all these things, or any of them can take place, another matter must, according to the divine program, be attended to. That other matter is the calling and acceptance and begettal to the divine nature of an elect "church of the first-borns, which are written in heaven." (Heb. 12:23.) This is the work which has been in progress for nearly nineteen centuries. As soon as it shall have been completed the glorious Redeemer with his exalted bride class will inaugurate his glorious reign of a thousand years, by binding Satan and ushering in the new dispensation, for which the whole groaning creation has so long waited.—Rom. 8:22, 19.

Thus it will be seen that our Lord's testing, which began at Jordan at the time of his consecration and which ended at Calvary, was two fold, and the two trials progressed simultaneously, and to have failed in either particular would have lost all. As a man from the human standpoint, born under the law, he was obligated to keep the law in every particular. To have failed would have been death. As a new creature, who had entered into a covenant of sacrifice, our Lord was obligated to sacrifice willingly and obediently, his life, his rights, everything that he possessed, in harmony with the overrulings of divine providence. "The cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?" (John 18:11) To have failed of the full, complete sacrifice would have cost him everything, and he would have accomplished nothing by all his previous experiences and loyalty.

Our Lord's faithfulness in sacrificing during the three and a half years of his ministry added nothing whatever to the perfection which he had at Jordan. He was perfect and an acceptable sacrifice to begin with, and he merely maintained that perfection and that acceptance with the Father "faithful unto death." Wherefore he has attained his present exaltation and is in readiness to be the world's merciful and faithful High Priest, and he also has the merit of his sacrifice in the hands of justice ready at the appropriate time in the end of this age to be applied for the cancellation of the sins of the whole world.

The church shares in the benefits of our Lord's death in a different way from that of the world. She has her Redeemer's merit imputed to her by (because of) faith—to cover the weaknesses and blemishes of her flesh, so that her flesh may be presented holy and acceptable to the Father by the Redeemer, who imputes the merit of his sacrifice to it and makes it acceptable as a part of his own sacrifice. "For if we suffer (with him) we shall also reign with him"; "If so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together"; "Present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, your reasonable service"; "Fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ." (2 Tim. 2:12; Rom. 8:17; 12:1; Col. 1:24.) These are some of the invitations offered to the church who are now qualifying to be members of the royal priesthood in the great work of blessing and uplifting mankind as God has foreordained and promised.

AN INTERPOLATED TEXT

Question.—Kindly explain Rev. 20:5: "But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished."

Answer.—Scholars are agreed that this text is an interpolation. We must remember, however, that it is one thing to be legally, or officially dead, and another thing to be actually dead. But as Jesus said to some, he recognized as alive only those who accepted him. Those who had not the Son had not life in any sense or decree; those who had the Son, have the beginning of life reckoned to them. The world, however, during the thousand years will have opportunity, not only of being awakened, but of having fulness of life. If, therefore, after they are awakened, they will go on and render obedience to the laws of the kingdom, they will be lifted up, up, up out of death to perfection and life.

BIBLE QUESTIONS A MINISTER'S GREATEST TROUBLES

Question.—If the Bible has been misinterpreted on many vital points, how are we to understand the Bible, if we are not educated enough to know these things?

Answers.—Ministers are less able to interpret the Bible than any other class of people in the world. The Theological Seminaries do not teach Bible interpretation, but instruct the student how to defend the various creeds, and how to choke off investigation, and to make the investigator feel foolish. Nothing troubles a minister more than Bible questions.

Our advice to those who want to know the truth is to search the Scriptures and use Concordances and every Bible help that will assist them in a proper and rational understanding of the Scriptures. But be sure that the subject is approached honestly and prayerfully, with a desire to know the truth and without sectarian prejudices. Remember the words of the Master, "Sanctify them through thy truth; thy word is truth."

THE GREAT TEACHER EXPOSED SADDUCEES' IGNORANCE

Question.—"Whose wife shall she be in the resurrection," who had several husbands?

Answer.—The Sadducees, the agnostics who did not believe in the resurrection, tried to entrap the great Teacher by asking one of their stock questions. Seven different brothers in turn married the same woman and all died before she did. "To which of them shall she be wife in the resurrection?" They did not ask, "To which of these will she be wife in heaven or purgatory or eternal torture?" for neither Jesus nor the Jews held any such teaching. The Pharisees and Jesus taught the resurrection of the dead; and it was against this teaching that the Sadducees aimed their sarcastic question.

Note the majesty of the Master's answer: "Ye do err, not knowing the Scriptures, neither the power of God!" (Matt. 22:23-33) You do not understand the Scripture teaching respecting such questions, and you ignore in your question the great divine power which, at the resurrection time, will be exercised to straighten out all the difficulties of the situation. Then the great Teacher proceeded to inform them that such as would (gradually) attain to the resurrection—such as would get a complete raising up out of sin and death, would "neither marry nor be given in marriage," but would be sexless, as are the angels. Thus the supposedly unanswerable question of the Sadducees fell flat, and their ignorance was exposed.

FRENCH VOLUNTEER MATTER

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THE MARK OF CRYSTALLIZATION OF CHARACTER

"Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended; but this one thing I do, forgetting those things that are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the work for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus."—Phil. 3:13, 14.

In the epistle to the Philippians, St. Paul expresses his full appreciation of his opportunity to gain a prize, something worthy of laying hold upon, of grasping fully, of getting possession of. What was that for which the great Apostle was striving and which he had not yet attained? He spoke of this thing as a prize, which he was pressing along to win.

We may view "the mark for the prize of the high calling" from two standpoints, both of which are correct. From one standpoint, this mark is that of heart-likeness to God's dear Son, of perfection of intention, of love for righteousness, for God, for the brethren of Christ, and for the world, even our enemies. This degree of character-development should be attained as early as possible in our Christian experience, and should be such that, were we to die at any time after its attainment, God would count us worthy of a share in the first resurrection.

From the other standpoint, this "mark for the prize of the high calling" is that of crystallization of character in the likeness of our Lord. After having attained a heart-likeness to Christ, we must hold it fast, and see that in all the testings which the Lord permits to come upon us, we are counted by him as overcomers, not in our own strength, but in that of our Redeemer. This mark of crystallized character is not attained so early in our Christian experience as is the mark of character-development. But by fighting the good fight until the end of our course, we crystallize our characters in love for the principles of righteousness, for God, for the brethren and even for our enemies. If thus faithful, we shall win the prize of glory, honor and immortality.

PERFECTION, NOT CONSECRATION, THE MARK

There is no reason to think that our consecration is the mark; for our testing, our proving comes after our consecration, and not before it. No one would be at the mark merely because he is consecrated, but because he had endured the testing, thus proving that his consecration was from the heart and that he was sincere in the devotion of his every power to the service of God. We cannot suppose that the mark is reached the next moment after consecration. Some degree of character-development must be possessed; there must be some mark of character, in order that God may count that person worthy of everlasting life.

God's standard of character is perfection, which must be maintained by loyalty and obedience under whatever tests he permits to come to individuals upon any plane of life. No one will get the prize of everlasting life unless he successfully passes those tests. We realize that the church has been under trial throughout the Gospel age, as to her worthiness to obtain "glory, honor and immortality"—joint-heirship with her Lord. —Rom. 8:17.

From the Scriptures we learn that throughout the Messianic age the world will be tried by The Christ, and that even after passing that test they will not receive the reward of everlasting life until God shall have proved them at the end of Christ's reign by loosing Satan for a "little season." (1 Cor. 15:24; Rev. 20:7-10) The fact that the world is thus to be tried by both The Christ and God confirms the thought that God has a standard, or mark, of character to be attained by all those who are loyal and obedient to him—on any plane of existence.

While this mark of character to be attained by the world during Messiah's reign is not the one to which St. Paul refers in our text, nevertheless there is such a character-mark to be reached by mankind. Those who then attain the mark will have everlasting life on the human plane. But those who attain the mark to which the Apostle refers will be given eternal life on the divine plane.

THE MARK OF CHARACTER-CRYSTALLIZATION

The Apostle was a noble example of one who had reached the mark. So far as we know, he was ready to die at any time; hence it was not this mark of character-development to which he had not attained. He had not yet attained to the prize itself, and could not do so until his change should come. He was constantly pressing along, trusting that God would give him all the things that are in reservation for "them that love him." (1 Cor. 2:9) We could not think the Apostle to mean that he would reach this mark of character-development just at the moment before death. This would be an absurdity of thought.

Our Lord Jesus was at the mark of perfect character at the time of his consecration; and he maintained himself at the mark. As a sacrifice he would have been acceptable at any time. It was his part to consecrate his life and not to hold it back. It was the Father's part so to arrange matters that the Jews might not take our Lord until the Father's hour for him had come. In everything that he did he submitted himself to the Father's will. Our Lord spoke of his "cup" as the one which the Father had prepared for him.—John 18:11.

If our Lord had determined for himself the time and the manner of his death, then he was pouring the cup. If the Jews had determined these points, then they were pouring the cup. But neither our Lord nor the Jews did so, for both time and manner were foretold by the prophets. Our Lord took the cup and accepted it as the Father's providence for him. If the Father's providence had led to his death a year sooner or two years sooner, if the Father's will had been expressed in our Lord's crucifixion at an earlier time, even then it would have been well with him. But he "learned obedience by the things which he suffered."—Heb. 5:8; 2:10.

At Jordan our Lord was shown to be perfect and to have made a perfect consecration, both by the descent of the holy Spirit and by the voice of Jehovah. (Matt. 3:16, 17) He had also a perfect body—though it was earthly—in which the new creature operated. But his obedience must be tested—his loyalty even unto death. Whatever the degree of testing to which our Lord might have been subjected, it was just the right amount, according to the Father's wisdom. Our Lord would have been just as much an overcomer had he died at any time after his consecration. But if he had died sooner than he did, it would merely have proved that the Father did not require as much evidence of our Lord's faithfulness and loyalty as he did require.

OUR LORD AN OVERCOMER AT CONSECRATION

Here some one may ask, "Is it proper to say that our Lord was an overcomer as a new creature at the time when he made his consecration?"

Our answer is, Yes. An overcomer is a victor. The word does not imply that a man has completed the victory, however; for we sometimes say, He will lead them from victory to victory. So with our Lord. He continued faithful as an overcomer down unto death; but he was not counted as an overcomer until death. Between the Father and our Lord as a human being there was no Mediator, and as a new creature there was neither robe to cover nor advocate to represent in case of any deviation from the will of God; and the slightest deflection therefrom would have meant the second death.

The Scriptures give us two pictures of our Lord as an overcomer at his consecration, where he gained the first great victory over his flesh. The first of these pictures (Lev. 16:11), the killing of the bullock on the Day of Atonement, represents the death of our Lord's humanity at the moment when he consecrated himself at Jordan. There he gained a victory and continued victorious until the end of his course.

The second picture is found in Rev. 5:2-7. Here our Lord is represented by a newly slain lamb. He was not this newly slain lamb at his death when he had finished his course, but at his consecration, when he began his course. The proclamation which the Revelator heard was, "Who is worthy to open the book, and to loose the seals thereof?" We read that John wept much. "And one of the elders saith unto me, Weep not: behold the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, hath prevailed to open the book and to loose the seven seals thereof . . . . And he came and took the book out of the right hand of him that sat upon the throne." Our Lord alone was worthy of the honor of receiving the divine plan into his care. We also read that John looked and saw the newly slain Lamb open the book.—Rev. 6.

After our Lord had entered upon his consecration he was the newly slain Lamb. Then the Father gave into his hand the scroll of the great divine plan of the ages—the scroll written on both inside and outside. The outside he was already able to read. But the inside, which contained information on spiritual things, remained sealed.

As soon as our Lord came up out of the water after his baptism, he was begotten of the holy Spirit and began to understand spiritual things. "The heavens [higher things] were opened unto him." The time when he began to be considered the slain Lamb, the time when the scroll was delivered to him, was the time of his consecration.

SUBMISSION THE FIRST REQUISITE—PATIENT ENDURANCE THE SECOND

A good illustration of the process of character-development and crystallization is afforded by the work of a potter. First, he must select the right kind of clay, for some clays would produce very coarse ware, others would crack or warp in the drying, and still others would not stand the intense heat. Having selected the proper clay the potter subjects it to very many processes of grinding, mixing and wetting until it comes from the mill a soft, plastic mass of the consistency of tough dough, ready for the potter's use. Then comes the moulding into the article desired. The dish is formed, or shaped, with care and dried. Next it is placed in the kiln and fired with an intense heat for two or three days and nights. Then it requires a long time to cool before it can be removed from the kiln. But even then it is only a porous, leaky vessel, altogether unfit for use until it has been dipped into a liquid glaze, or slip, which it readily absorbs.

Again it is subjected to the heat of the glaze kiln, which not only melts the glaze, but converts it into a perfectly transparent glaze all over the surface, making the article beautifully smooth and comely. But if the vessel is of very choice porcelain, to be made still more attractive to the eye by decorations, the ornamentation and gilding must be done at this stage, and the vessel must again be placed in the kiln for a third firing. Some vessels which have stood all the other tests, fail at this point and are cast into the waste heap. But if the vessel passes successfully the last test, it is ready for the service for which it was designed.

So in our Lord's case. Not only was he perfect as a man, but his own will was in complete subjection to the Father's will. When trials came, there was no swerving, no twisting, no bending. He was of the proper material. His heart (applying this word to the mind) was of the proper character. So must it be with us. Those who will be accepted and found worthy of the great reward will be of his character-likeness in this respect; they will be loyal to God's will. Not only will they endeavor both to ascertain and to do the Father's will, but they will be in heart submission to that will in every degree. The "cup" they will be required to drink is the same that our Lord drank—and "all of it!"

To follow in his steps, we must first reach this mark of character-development; and having done all, we must stand there. It is well to repeat the thought that it will not do for us to think that one reaches the mark of proper character-development just at the moment of death. Character should be attained as soon as possible. But having reached this character-development called the "mark," it is for us to stand faithful, and not be thrust away from it by the opposition of the world, the flesh and the devil. All such opposition must be endured before we can win the prize. Some of the noblest characters, who have been in an acceptable condition, and used of the Lord, did not get to the mark until they had passed through certain severe experiences.

"WE HAVE THE MIND OF CHRIST"

The thought of the Apostle seems to be, Here is a certain line of conduct and character-development which God has marked out; and it is the same for all who are in the race. The life of Christ is the rule. If we would attain the mark, obtain the price, we must follow this line, or rule, or mark.

The Apostle Paul had but one mind or will. "This one thing I do," he said. He was not a double-minded man, at one time thinking he would like to serve the Lord, at another time himself, and then again the adversary, etc. He had accepted the divine proposition to give all his talents to the service of the Lord. He had before his mind the great promise that God had made. For him there was but one thing in life.

The Scriptures tell us that during the Gospel age God has sent out a special call, or invitation, and that those who have accepted that call have "exceeding great and precious promises" of wonderful things to look forward to. All who accept the call should practically forget all the trifling things of life in order to win the prize—by manifesting to God faithfulness, obedience and loyalty. Character, not talent, makes us acceptable. God could give any one intellectual powers as good as ours or better. He will not grant any one a place in the kingdom on account of physical strength or endurance. He will not admit any one to the kingdom because of worldly prosperity or honor of men, or because of riches.

CONDITIONS REQUIRED IN THE RACE

What then is God seeking? To what has he called us? The Apostle Peter says that God has "called us to glory and virtue." (2 Peter 1:3) Certain conditions God requires of those who will run in the race. He requires that none be proud, but that they possess humility. And he will have no one in the kingdom of his elect who is weak, vacillating, so far as his mind is concerned. He may not have a strong intellect; but he must manifest to God that he has a strong will and firm determination, and that he has cut off everything in life in order to win the prize. He must also demonstrate his loyalty to God. He must not merely seek glory, but he must recognize and appreciate his responsibilities to God.

Loyalty is one of the great tests of character—loyalty to God, to his Word, loyalty to principle. Whatever follows, the Christian must be submissive to God, trustful and faithful. To such alone could we expect God to give the great blessings promised to overcomers. Hence we see that the Apostle was quite right in giving up all that he might serve God, that he might please the Father, and thus attain to this glorious reward of joint-heirship with his Son.

"EVERY SON WHOM HE RECEIVETH"

Not necessarily all who make a consecration, but all whose consecration God accepts, all whom he begets of his holy Spirit to become new creatures, will have the opportunity of reaching this mark of crystallization of character before they die. These will have full testing—"Every son whom he receiveth." (Heb. 12:6) This promise guarantees that they shall have trials and difficulties to develop them in the proper character-likeness of our Lord; and that none of their experiences will be cut short of this attainment. God will see to it that they have the full opportunity to develop character-likeness to Christ. Those who turn to sin wilfully, deliberately, will fall into the second death. Others may fall from the priestly class into the great company. But even these must have sufficient time to manifest their loyalty to God.

At the time of his consecration, our Lord was at the mark by virtue of his perfection. We are not at the mark at the time of our consecration; for we are imperfect. But we wish to do the Lord's will; and we have given ourselves to ascertain what that will is in order that we may render intelligent obedience thereto. In our Lord's case he had no such imperfection to overcome as we have. At the time of his consecration he loved his neighbor as himself, and he loved God with all his heart.

When we consecrate ourselves, we agree to do this; but we do not know what it means; just as St. Peter "wist not" what he said at the time of the transfiguration in the Mount: "Lord, it is good for us to be here. If thou wilt, let us make here three tabernacles; one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias." (Matt. 17:4) Neither did the two Apostles know what they were asking when they requested Jesus that they might sit the one on his right and the other on his left hand in the kingdom. Our Lord said to them, "Ye know not what ye ask."—Matt. 20:22.

Since at the time of our consecration we do not fully understand what we do, therefore we do a great deal of running to reach the mark. This our Lord had no need to do; for he was perfect. At consecration he was at the mark of perfect character, so that had he died at any subsequent time he would have received the reward of the Father, who said, "This is my Beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." (Matt. 3:17) At his baptism our Lord was at that mark of character which merited the promised reward of the Father, and to which we must attain before we can secure everlasting life, either on the plane of glory or otherwise.

Stephen, who was martyred very soon after Pentecost, must have lived habitually near to the Lord; for he, like Nathaniel, was an "Israelite indeed" in whom was no guile. The fact that the truth of God came to such as these men means that so far as their heart attitude was concerned they had been very near to the Lord under the law as their schoolmaster (Greek, pedagogue), so that when brought to Christ they could quickly learn of him. So it appears to be with us now. The differences in our natural education in right and wrong, in truth and error, are such that we cannot tell just how long it will take for each to attain to the character-likeness of our Lord and thus to prove worthy of eternal life.

"PUT YE ON THE LORD CHRIST"

We have suggested that the Lord's people, at the time of their consecration and begetting of the holy Spirit, are not ready for the kingdom, but require development, which time alone can accomplish. Notwithstanding this suggestion, is there not a sense in which God's people are regarded perfect at the time of their consecration—at the moment of their acceptance? Our answer is, Yes; they are counted so, but are not so actually. The flesh is reckoned perfect so that God can accept their offering.

But at this time the new creature is merely a babe in Christ and has not yet attained to the stature of manhood. Therefore, the necessity exists for entering the school of Christ and for "putting on Christ," as the Apostle expresses it. We begin to put on Christ after consecration, and after our begetting of the

holy Spirit. The babe grows into a child, and the child into a man. (Eph. 4:14, 13) The work of growing up into Christ is necessary before the child of God would be fit for the kingdom. The difference between a babe in Christ and one fit for the kingdom is that the latter has been tried and tested and has proved himself to be an overcomer.

When our Lord Jesus was at Jordan he was an overcomer. (Heb. 10:9) He was perfect and had correspondingly a larger appreciation of what he did than we have respecting our course when we consecrate. But he tells us, "Fear not, little flock," "be of good cheer; I have overcome the world."—Luke 12:32; John 16:33.

Yet even in our Lord's case, while he was an overcomer at the moment of his consecration, he really did not win the prize of the divine nature until the end of his race-course, until there had been demonstrated a sufficiency of worthiness for that high exaltation; and we know that the Father continued tests of obedience even unto the death on the cross. It was not until after this that our Lord was fully accepted as an overcomer, to whom it was granted to sit with the Father in his throne.

THE GREAT TEST IS TO REMAIN AT THE MARK

The possession of perfection necessarily means that one is at the mark, as in the case of Adam. The test is, not whether one can reach the mark, but whether one will remain at the mark—"having done all, to stand." (Eph. 6:13) When we reach the mark of character which God approves in every sense of the word, let us continue there. When our Lord came into the world he was perfect, loyal, at the mark—God's standard, perfection. Whether or not he would be moved away from the mark by the contradiction of sinners against himself, was to be proved. But none of these tests led him to abandon his determination to continue at the mark. So it should be with us—to the best of our ability.

The Spirit of God is the same whether manifested in himself or in angels or in men or in new creatures. We do not find the Spirit of God manifest in the majority of men, because of sin. We would find the Spirit of God manifest in angels. We should find the Spirit of God very manifest in the saints, who should carry with them into the new relationship all that they have naturally of the character-likeness to the Lord. The graces of spirit exhibited in the Lord's people are properly to be considered fruits of the holy Spirit; for their possessors have become new creatures, have entered into the race for the prize of the high calling. Some saints might be able by reason of natural qualities to make more rapid progress than would others in developing and perfecting these fruits and graces of the Spirit.

Sometimes the question arises, Should not the Lord's people perferably strive for character-likeness to Christ, with no particular desire as to what the Lord's reward will be? We answer, No. We should have "respect unto the recompense of the reward." In order to have the proper respect for the reward which God promises, it is necessary that we hold it up before us continually, and that we never lose sight of the prize.

Our Lord Jesus does not deprecate this looking at the prize. Listen to his words: "Father, glorify thou me with thine own self, with the glory which I had with thee before the world was." (John 17:5) Thus he prayed to the Father for the reward which the manifestation of his obedience would bring. So it should be with us; not that we have a right to insist that our efforts be rewarded, but that we should think of the blessing which God has promised those who love him, as "exceeding great and precious." Many in the nominal church do not see these things.

Let us keep the goal distinctly before our eyes. Doubtless the Lord meant the knowledge of the prize to serve as a stimulus for our upbuilding and strengthening. We look for "glory, honor and immortality"; and it is right for us to seek for them. Any other attitude would be false modesty. If the thought that it is presumption for us to aspire to the high calling comes before our minds, let us remember that our Lord wants us to be so inspired by the "great and precious promises" that we will work for these things which he has set before us, and that it would be presumption for us to refuse what he offers to us.

FREE MORAL AGENCY A FACTOR IN CHARACTER-DEVELOPMENT

Character may be viewed from two different standpoints. When Adam was created, he was a man of great and good character—"crowned with glory and honor." He was perfect, the image of God. There is a difference, however, between a character thus given, and one that is developed and tested by the exercise of free will. Our Heavenly Father desires that his intelligent creatures exercise their wills. Therefore instead of giving Adam a part of his own character-likeness and eliminating that which we call moral choice, he chose to give Adam his character-likeness, including free moral agency. So God created man in his own image." God foreknew the fall of man and all the circumstances connected with it. He knew that the permission of evil for a time would ultimately result in great blessings for all. He knew that the time would come when every creature in heaven and in earth would be obedient to him, not only because there was no opportunity of doing otherwise, but from choice.

Those who are appreciative of God's character should desire to have this character-likeness. Only such will merit everlasting life amongst either angels or men. God is testing along these lines the worthiness of those who are on trial for life eternal. Hence, "The Father seeketh such to worship him" as "worship him in spirit and in truth"—intelligently.—John 4:23, 24.

WE MUST "LOVE RIGHTEOUSNESS AND HATE INIQUITY"

In the formation of character, we see that the lessons which we learn in the school of Christ are very helpful to us. Originally, man was made in the image of God. Yet in us the image is blurred, indistinct. Those who learn the lessons now and appreciate them to the full will be given no further trial. Those who have not had a sufficiency of opportunity will have a full trial in the age to come. Under the discipline, the chastenings and the rewards of that time, they will learn how much better is righteousness than sin, truth than error. They will develop in the character-likeness of God, which Adam lost, and will see the exceeding sinfulness of sin. They will learn both to will and to do righteousness. All who fail to learn this lesson will be judged unworthy of eternal life.

We see that the angels willed of themselves whether they would be obedient, or be disobedient and enjoy the pleasures of sin for a reason. All the holy angels, who are now in favor with God, are such as have had their testing and have come off victors. Their example will prove more and more a lesson to us as we come to understand it. As a result of this knowledge, we see in God the noblest sentiment that could actuate our Creator and Father in dealing with his creatures; and we are glad that we have chosen to do his will concerning us.

Finally it is important that we should keep in mind the fact that since true love on our part will manifest itself in obedience, then disobedience is an evidence of a loss of love, as viewed from the Lord's standpoint, a deflection from loyalty, a failure to endure the tests. We must agree that the Lord's standpoint of judgment is a reasonable one. Should one ask, How would it be if we should disobey through ignorance? The answer is, that the Lord has made provision against our ignorance; first, He has given us the Word of Truth, "that the man of God may be perfect [perfectly informed], thoroughly furnished unto all good works"; and second, He has promised to supply such helps to the spirit of holiness and the understanding of his Word, as will enable us to do what is pleasing in his sight.—2 Tim. 3:17; John 16:13, 14.

Love is the crown of all graces, "the fulfilling of the law." Without a fervent, glowing love, it will be impossible to render obedience or to stand the tests for development and crystallization of character arranged for by divine love. Our Lord tells us that he was beloved of the Father; and the Father himself declared, "This is my beloved Son." We can readily see why our Lord Jesus was greatly beloved, for he expressed and fully manifested the Father's love. But it astounds us to know that this same love is exercised by the Father toward us! "Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God!" "The Father himself loveth you"!—1 John 3:1; John 16:27.

LOVING OBEDIENCE BRINGS JOY AND PEACE

Let us, dearly beloved, be more than ever careful respecting the Word of the Lord; let us not by negligence give evidence of a decay of love. Our Lord points out that his continuance in the Father's love, as the well-beloved Son, with all which this implies, was because of his obedience to the Father's will; and that following the same line, he must require that we should be obedient to him if we would abide in his love and share his throne and glory.—John 15:10.

Our Lord's instruction and commandments are not intended to terrify us, nor to deprive us of happiness. On the contrary, "These things have I spoken unto you that my joy be in you, and that your joy might be filled full." (John 15:11) Those who give surest evidence of living nearest the Lord well know that obedience to the Lord's words, together with the privilege thus obtained of abiding in him and his love, is the greatest joy, a joy which wholly outweighs all the trifling pleasures which the world has to offer. It is the joy and peace which "passeth all understanding," which rules in the heart, and which brings with it the promise, the assurance, "not only of the life which now is, but also of that which is to come."

THE WORLD CALLED TO REPENTANCE

"God now commandeth men everywhere to repent; because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained."—Acts 17:30, 31.

When God sentenced Father Adam to death he very properly said nothing about repentance, for he offered Adam no hope of a future life. If, then, no hope of a future life was known to Adam or revealed to him, why should God deal with him at all? Adam was sentenced to death, to destruction. There is no basis upon which to command a man to repent unless something is offered him as a reward for repentance.

God had put upon Adam the sentence of death, which could be removed only by the payment of a ransom-price. God fully intended that some day all mankind should have an opportunity of coming into harmony with him and of having another trial, or judgment, for life; but it was not his due time to explain his program. Therefore, Adam lived and died without any command whatever to repent. And so did his children.

The first intimation of what God might do was given by the Prophet Enoch. But the revelation made by Enoch was not a sufficient basis for offering hope to mankind nor for telling them to repent.—Jude 14, 15.

A SUGGESTION OF HOPE FOR THE WORLD

So years passed by until the time of Abraham. Then God told Abraham that he would reveal a secret to him, because Abraham was his friend. That secret was not a message to be preached, but to be believed by himself and by those who would be heirs of that promise, which was not yet applicable to any outside of Abraham's descendants. The secret was, "In thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed." (Gen. 28:14) I intend to bless the world, Abraham. If you are obedient to my instructions, your seed will get the blessing and transmit it to the world in general. It was only by implication, therefore, that Abraham had any suggestion that a life of repentance would be rewarded.

In due time God called the children of Israel and dealt with them through Moses. Practically he said, "Do you wish to be my people? If so, come now, enter into a covenant with me; I will be your God and you shall be my people."—Lev. 26:12.

Israel was not commanded to repent, nor were any of the rest of the world. It was an invitation, not a command. God was ready to make a covenant with them. That covenant was that they were to obey the law, and that by their obedience to the Ten Commandments and the spirit of their covenant they would become God's people. But when they tried to keep the law they found that they could not do so, because of inherited weakness. Hence there was nothing more to be said to them along that line. They had had their opportunity and they had failed.

THE CALL TO REPENTANCE

When Jesus came he kept the law, and inherited all the promises of the Law Covenant. Then he offered a share of the kingdom which God had promised to set up (Dan. 2:44), and blessing, honor and glory to as many of the Jews as would come into harmony with him, as many as would walk in his steps of self-sacrifice and thus have God's favor. (John 1:12) In substance he said, "This is the way. Trust in me and walk in my steps. Thus you shall be my disciples. You shall share in my sufferings now, and by and by in my glory and kingdom."

In due time, after a certain number had been gathered from the Jews, this message was extended to all the Gentiles who were in the right condition of heart. The Gentiles not having indicated their desire to come back into harmony with God as the Jewish nation had done, God then commanded them everywhere to repent. (Acts 17:30) This he did through those who were the representatives of his teaching, the apostles and the church. In proportion as they understood the plan of God and were in harmony with it, they could tell their neighbors that a new condition had been established and that God would deal henceforth with the Gentiles.

THE RANSOM THE BASIS OF HOPE FOR THE WORLD

Why should God deal with the Gentiles now, when he had refused to deal with them before? The explanation of this new condition is that Christ had died, and God's great plan had now matured enough to be made applicable to all men everywhere. God had appointed a day in which to judge the world in righteousness. (Acts 17:30, 31) That great day is the next age, the day of Christ, the day of Messiah's kingdom. God has made this provision for the redemption of all through the death of Christ. Mankind were all under the death sentence, and God could not deal with them until that sentence was lifted, or until provision was made for lifting it. He has not annulled the death sentence, but he has provided a ransom for all. —1 Tim. 2:6.

Whoever knows of this plan of redemption knows that God intends to give every individual of Adam's race an individual trial for life. That trial will not be merely to determine whether mankind will try to do right and battle against all the evil influences of the world, but God will subdue sin and uplift all of Adam's race who are desirous of being uplifted.

God has declared that no member of Adam's race need die. Everyone who will may return to God through the great Atonement to be effected by the Redeemer. He has not completed this work yet, but to those who have an ear to hear, the word has gone out that there is to be a future trial, and that the manner of one's life now will have a bearing upon that trial. It is proper to tell this now, because the provision has been made through Christ's death.

THE PRESENT MESSAGE TO THE WORLD

Prior to the Gospel age it was of no use to tell the people to come into harmony with God. But now the whole world is to be brought into a trial to help them and not to condemn them—a trial to see whether they are worthy to have the everlasting life that God will provide for them and assist the willing to attain. Wherever people are willing to hear, the message is, Repent! repent! Cease from sin, and this reformation of character will have an influence upon your everlasting life.

If one is not of the church class he is not in trial for life or death. But it will be to his advantage to live uprightly, for there is a time of reckoning coming. God has provided for this day of trial in the death of Christ. Beforehand, however, the Lord is selecting a church class. The Lord is thus preparing a great class of missionaries who will do everything possible to assist men out of sin and degradation back to harmony with God.

In times past God acted as though he did not notice when sin was committed—unless it was a grievous sin. Then he merely took the lives of the sinners under unpleasant conditions —they went to sleep. The Prophet Ezekiel says that God took all of the Sodomites away as he saw good. (Ezek. 16:50) After the church's trial, or judgment, shall have been finished and the overcomers shall have been found worthy, then, in that time of the world's judgment, the Sodomites will have an opportunity as had the Jews who heard Jesus at the first advent. And it will be much more tolerable then for the people of Tyre and Sidon and Sodom and Gomorrah than it will be for the people of Chorazin, Bethsaida, Capernaum, etc.; for the latter had had opportunities of knowledge, against which they sinned; they therefore had more wilfulness in the matter than did the Sodomites.—See Matt. 11:21-24.

At that time God had sent no command to the Sodomites to repent. So God merely "winked at" (overlooked) the ignorance and sin of that time. (Acts 17:30) He neither threatened nor did anything else in the matter. He merely blotted the Sodomites out of existence. Their fate served as a foreshadowing, as the Apostle says, that God will not forever permit mankind to remain in sin, but that he will destroy the sinner. None shall be destroyed, however, until first he shall have had the opportunity for everlasting life, secured for every member of Adam's race, through our Lord Jesus Christ.

JESUS' RESURRECTION THE ASSURANCE OF GOD'S FAVOR

The Apostle recognizes the fact that the judgment had not begun in his day. He points forward to the day of Christ and declares that God's assurance now set before the world of mankind is that there will be a future time of judgment. Through Christ's sacrificial death the opportunity for everlasting life will come to all. Mankind have already been condemned in Adam. They could not have another trial until the condemnation of the first trial was lifted. Therefore, not until God had provided a Redeemer would he command any to repent. The Apostle says that God's assurance to mankind in this matter is based upon the fact that he had raised Christ from the dead.—Acts 17:31.

When God had raised Jesus from the dead it became a testimony that his was a sacrificial death, an acceptable offering. And Jesus' ascension was a still further demonstration that this One whom the Father had raised from the dead by his own power, was to be the great King to rule, the great Priest to succor, assist and instruct, and the great Judge to direct and order the affairs of the world and to give proper rewards in the great day of God.

Whoever therefore hears about Jesus' death and resurrection should understand that this was God's redemption arrangement. They should also be informed that mankind are all sinners and that death is the penalty of sin. If any should ask, How does Jesus' death affect humanity? we show that God has highly exalted him to be a Savior. In God's due time, as soon as the elect class shall have been completed and the reign of

six thousand years of sin and evil shall have ended, then he will grant redemption from sin to all—to the Jew first and afterwards to the Gentiles.

As many as hear now should repent; but as many as do not hear in the present time are not commanded by God to repent. St. Paul's thought seems to me, Repent now and thus influence your future conditions, even if you do not wish to become a member of the body of Christ. Thousands of millions of mankind have gone down into death. When they are awakened during the period of Messiah's reign, this will be the great message—"God has opened up a fountain for cleansing from sin and uncleanness. Whosoever will may partake of the blessing and reconciliation with God and thereby attain everlasting life."—See Zech. 13:1; Rev. 22:17.

At present the god of this world hath blinded the world's eyes of understanding (2 Cor. 4:4), but soon their eyes will be opened. The time is coming when all shall see and hear, and when none, from the least to the greatest, will need to say, Know ye the Lord, for all shall know him. Then when they know, each will be responsible. At the end of the Millennial age when they shall have received their full blessing through the Mediator they will be required to do God's will on earth even as it is done in heaven.—Jer. 31:33, 34.

FUTURE LIFE INFLUENCED BY PRESENT CONDUCT

It is a very important feature of our work to let our light so shine that men may see our good works and glorify our Father which is in heaven—not their Father, but our Father. (1 Pet. 2:12) The present time is not the world's, but the church's visitation. God is seeking the people who are in a voluntary condition of righteousness. This is not the time for dealing with the world, but for God's people, as burning and shining lights, to reprove all sin. In proportion as the light shines out it will reprove darkness.

If we speak at all about a future age it is a special part of our duty to make clear to our hearers that the conduct of life at the present time will have a bearing on the future life. To say that there are two chances—a chance now and a chance by and by—is wholly wrong. We say to them that during this Gospel age there is only one chance, and the only way to get that chance is to walk in the footsteps of Jesus.

But for those who are by and by to be under the Mediatorial kingdom it is proper to tell them that a life of obedience to God in harmony with the principles of righteousness will be a blessing to themselves in the present, and also in the future. There are a great many people who are living upright and honorable lives and who are doing a great deal of good in this present time. If they thought they were not doing good, they would be discouraged. An incentive to a high standard of life would be taken from them; for they believe that righteous living now has a bearing on the future. In this they are right. But their standard is not so high as that set forth in the Scriptures for the church. That standard is necessarily high; for saints, and saints alone, are to be joint-heirs with Christ and members of the bride class.

A great mistake was made in the past when Brother Calvin declared that the non-elect were to be roasted to all eternity. On the contrary, we find the teaching of God's Word to be that the non-elect are to be blessed by the elect with an opportunity for reconciliation to God—blessed with an opportunity for life on the earthly plane. God will use the elect class for the purpose of blessing the world of mankind. God has a loving, sympathetic plan for all of his creatures, which will be revealed to them in his own due time.

MENTAL SUGGESTION A MEANS OF TEMPTATION

"Get thee hence, Satan; for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve."—Matt. 4:10.

Shortly after our Lord's baptism, he was led of his own spirit, illuminated by the holy Spirit received at baptism, to go apart to the wilderness of Judea for a season of quiet study. It was at the close of this period of Bible study and prayer, when our Lord was weak from his forty-day fast, that the adversary assaulted him with subtle temptations.

We are not told how Jesus recognized Satan, but we are inclined to think that the adversary was not visible to our Lord's natural sight, but to his mental vision—his eyes of understanding; for Satan, like the other fallen angels, has been under restraint of darkness until the judgment of the great day. It is our thought that Satan was permitted to bring mental suggestions before our Lord's mind. Evidently our Lord recognized the source of these presentations as evil, in whatever way they came to him.

The popular conception of Satan as a monstrosity with hoofs, horns, etc., is a superstition belonging to the dark ages. Really in his own personality he is a very glorious being, who has not been impaired by the six thousand years of alienation from God, although his countenance may have lost some of its Godlikeness.

SPIRITUAL POWER NOT TO BE USED SELFISHLY

In approaching our Lord, Satan did not attempt to lie outright, nor to distort facts, but rather to put a false color on them. He may have approached Jesus as a friend, who had known him in his pre-existent state and who was deeply interested in his welfare. Satan's intrusion was, first of all, to give our Lord some kindly advice, by suggesting that since Jesus had been fasting for a long time, he was doing himself injury; and that if he really knew what power he possessed he would command those stones to be made bread.

Thus approached by one who was of a higher order of being than himself, one who had not taken upon himself a bondman's form, it was natural that Jesus did not repulse Satan, but answered in a kind manner. Our Lord said, "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." (Matt. 4:4) I have made a full consecration of myself to God, and am seeking to know his will, in order that I may do it, whatever difficulties may be involved therein. Therefore, since my life is consecrated, I will not use this holy power which I possess, to do anything for my own comfort or benefit in any manner.

SPIRITUAL POWER NOT TO BE USED FOOLISHLY

Foiled in his first attempt, the adversary quickly changed the subject, not even dissenting from our Lord's decision. He then presented a second subtle temptation to use the divine power given our Lord. We do not understand that Satan took our Lord bodily to the pinnacle of the Temple in Jerusalem, but that he suggested a plan by which our Lord could bring himself into prominence before the people and at the same time demonstrate that the power of the Most High God was upon him.

Our Lord's quick mind detected the error, and he promptly answered: "It is written again, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God." (Matt. 4:7) Again changing his method of attack, Satan endeavored to give the impression that he himself was tired of the condition of rebellion against God in the world, and that he was ready to join our Lord in a great social uplift. Jesus probably knew that Satan was the prince of this world and that his influence was everywhere felt.

SPIRITUAL POWER NOT TO BE USED CONTRARY TO GOD'S WILL

As in the second temptation, we do not think that our Lord was taken out of the wilderness, but that mental suggestion was used to influence him to disobedience to the Father. In all the world there is no mountain from which all the kingdoms of the world can be seen. We understand the "mountain" to be a symbol of Satan's empire, which is world-wide. Satan doubtless brought before the Lord's mind all that he knew of the great Roman Empire, and the wonderful influence which he as a perfect man could exert if he occupied a prominent position therein.

We can imagine Satan as saying, "Messiah is to be king over all the earth. I can easily and quickly help you into that position. Let us co-operate. I will make you chief ruler of the earth on the sole condition that you recognize me. I do not ask that you shall not recognize Jehovah; but that you shall be under my supervision. I can give you all this dominion without any trouble. Never mind the future; let me show you how to make progress now. I will get you into a good position, without removing anyone else. You will not be required to do anything very bad."

During the forty days in the wilderness our Lord had come to see that the dominion of earth could be attained only through great suffering. He was weak from his long fast, and all the details of prophecy were before his mind. He saw himself as a lamb dumb before its shearers; as the serpent lifted up in the wilderness. Satan's suggestion was a temptation. But after consideration he saw that Satan was asking him to violate his covenant—to go contrary to God's will. Immediately he answered, "Get thee hence, Satan; for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve."

Then the devil left the Lord, finding nothing to work upon—so loyal was Jesus to the very Word of Jehovah. Afterwards the angels came and ministered to him.

EVEN FALLEN ANGELS EXCEL IN STRENGTH

The fact that Jesus discussed matters with the adversary does not furnish us with an excuse to try our ability in this

direction. For any of us, with our imperfect reasoning faculties, to get into a discussion with Satan or any of the fallen angels would be very unwise. There are doubtless reasons why our Lord conversed with Satan; but it would be very unsafe for us to do so. If we are sure that we have had a communication from fallen angels, let us remember that we are commissioned to preach to men, not to angels.

Some of the Lord's people have gotten into difficulty by not using the spirit of a sound mind along this line. Evil spirits have a way of drawing the unsuspecting on, little by little. They are "seducing spirits," as St. Paul tells us. (1 Tim. 4:1) A brother in the truth once told us of his experience with them. Strange to say he was in the truth when he had communication with the spirits. He did not say how he first got into communication with them, but he explained the divine plan of the ages to them and told them what would happen to the fallen angels. For several days they manifested interest, coming freqently to hear him. After a while they began to dispute among themselves and finally to curse one another.

The brother had so cultivated the clairaudient power that he could hear them. In disgust he tried to get rid of them. Not only would they not go, but they made matters intolerable for him. Finally he wrote us in distress, asking what method to use to get rid of them. We advised him to go to the Lord in prayer, confessing that he had done wrong, and asking the Lord's forgiveness; then, in the name of the Lord, to command them to leave him. Afterward he wrote us that he had followed our advice, and after a tedious time had finally gotten rid of his unwelcome visitors.

POWERS OF EVIL INCREASING

As the time of trouble draws near, we can readily suppose that our adversary will have increased power. Satan and his fallen angels will have a very baneful influence upon humanity.

Some peculiar occurrences have been brought to our attention. One was an account of a picture manifestation. A picture had been taken of a piece of property. When the photograph was developed it showed the likeness of a man who was recognized as a former owner who had been dead for some time. It seems evident, then, that evil spirits are able to exert some influence even upon a camera.

Another case was that of a person who declares that he actually saw certain things which could not possibly have taken place. How this could be we do not know. We do not know what powers evil spirits may possess. We have all heard of cases of mesmerism, hypnotism, etc., where the person under control of evil spirits was able to describe accurately things taking place at a distance. We cannot tell how these things are done. We assume that it is the fallen angels who have power so to impress the brain of the medium that she would seem to see what was being done in another city. In our dreams we see people walk and hear them speak. If we can have such mental pictures naturally, we may easily suppose that evil spirits may have power in this direction.

RESIST EVERYTHING AKIN TO OCCULTISM

The facts, however, do not make us understand the philosophy of the matter. Nor do we know to what extent these things will be used in the future. We have no doubt that some very startling events will occur. Even to those who have the knowledge of the divine plan the things permitted will be strange. We should be prepared for almost anything that may be told.

We have great confidence in the power of these evil spirits who claim to do wonderful deeds. In fact, we can see that while materialization would be possible to them, yet a representation to the mind would be much easier. To impress a picture upon the brain would also be easy. Suppose such power were to be exercised, and the Lord's people misrepresented by the adversary as doing some desperate act. Be prepared for all such things. It is too near the end of the race to think or turning back!

MY CONFIDENCE

"You ask me do I fear?
Should that child fear
Whose Father owns earth's store of precious things;
Whose Will carves destinies, whose Wish sways kings;
Whose Love surpasses fondest mother-love,
And whose unsleeping eye guards from above?

* * *

"My Father is the Lord; I am His child.
His storehouse groans beneath a golden weight,
And I shall never want, though sore my strait.
When danger threatens and the way seems drear,
My Father's guiding hand is ever near;
His kindly counsel will my way attend
And bring me safely to my journey's end." —Unknown.

THE SACRIFICE OF THE CHRIST

At Jordan our Lord made a consecration of himself, even unto death. That is to say, he was baptized, immersed. He said, "Henceforth, I shall have no will of my own. Whatever is your will, Father, shall be my will. I shall do anything that you will have me do; not merely those things required in obedience to the divine law—failure to do which would be sin—but all the things written in the Book. I have given up my life. Direct me through your providences and through your words that I may see your will and do it." This was not a giving away of life in the sense of giving it to the world; for he was giving himself to God. When he made his consecration unto God, he was prepared to face even death itself and to give up his existence if such should be the Father's will.—Psa. 40:7, 8; Heb. 10:7.

Following his consecration he began his ministry. As he advanced in the service of fulfilling the Father's will, he submitted himself to everything that was written in the Book. The language of his heart was, "Lo, I come (in the volume of the Book it is written of me), to do thy will, O God" (Heb. 10:7), and in his submission of himself he gave out his power, strength, to such an extent that it is stated that great multitudes of people out of all Palestine and beyond, "came to hear him and to be healed of their diseases; and they that were vexed with unclean spirits; and they were healed. And the whole multitude sought to touch him; for there went virtue [vitality] out of him and healed them all." (Luke 6:17-19) He kept back nothing for the purpose of recuperating his vigor, but was daily yielding his life in obedience to what he understood to be the Father's will; He was, therefore, doing the things pleasing to God—everything that God wished to have him do, as well as the things written in the law.

"IT IS FINISHED!"

When on the cross our Lord cried, "It is finished!" He had "poured out his soul unto death"; He had "made his soul an offering for sin" (John 19:30; Isa. 53:12, 10); he had permitted his life to be taken from him in obedience to the Father's arrangement. These things had all been prefigured in the type. On such a day and in such a month the passover lamb must be slain. Our Lord recognized everything particularized in the law—whether by direct command or in type—as God's will. He declared that men did not take his life from him, in the sense of doing something that he was unwilling to have them do. He had truly said, "I delight to do thy will, O my God; thy law is within [in the midst of] my heart" (Psa. 40:8), and he permitted them to put him to death, because he was submitting to God's will.

Our Lord realized that his life was taken away fraudulently. He did not resist, but allowed this to be done. He had agreed that he would not resist, that he would do whatever the Father sent him to do. After he had once made a consecration could he have withdrawn? No; for he had covenanted to submit to whatever divine providence might indicate to be the Father's will. He had entered into a positive contract under which he had obligated himself to be faithful to God's will, and God had bound himself that he would give our Lord the exceeding great reward of exaltation to the divine nature because of that faithful obedience. God had given him the holy Spirit as a bond of that contract.

HUMAN LIFE-RIGHTS BELONG TO OUR LORD

There is a wide difference between making an exchange and bestowing a reward. To exchange is to part with something in return for something else regarded as an equivalent. To reward is to give something in acknowledgment of merit. This word conveys no idea of obligation. Whoever gives a reward acts altogether of his own free will.

The arrangement made between the Father and our Lord did not, therefore, involve our Lord's right to earthly life; for the Father did not contract to give him life on the highest plane of existence in exchange for his life as a human being. Had this been the case our Lord would have had nothing to give to any of the human race—either to the church or to the world of mankind.

On the contrary, the Father was to reward our Lord by exalting him far above angels, principalities and powers as an

acknowledgment of the Son's obedience even unto death. The earthly life-rights are still our Lord's. The fact that he is to give human life to mankind is evidence that he has the right to that earthly life.

We do not understand that our Lord Jesus agreed with the Father merely to lay down his life. So great was his love for and his confidence in Jehovah, that he was eager to carry out the Father's plan for the blessing of mankind, whatever the cost might be to himself. The Scriptures set forth his position at consecration, in the words, "Lo, I come to do thy will, O God." How much of God's will did this assertion involve? "In the volume [the roll] of the Book it is written of me," I come prepared to do everything that is written in the Book. Not only had he come with God's law written in his heart, but he had offered to do everything written in the scroll of the Book.

How could Jesus know what was written in the Book? There is every reason to believe that he did not, at the time of his consecration, know all that was therein written. The things written in the Book, written in the types and shadows of the Old Testament, were understood by none of the Jews. Many of them, doubtless, our Lord did not fully understand before his baptism. God's will is expressed in the types of the Law Covenant. Our Lord had said, "Everything written in the Book." But who will say that at that time he knew how much was involved? As a matter of fact, he did not know until after his baptism, when the higher things were opened to him and made known to him; and following this enlightenment he went into the wilderness to study and meditate upon them.

DEAD TO EVERYTHING BUT THE WILL OF GOD

Although prior to his consecration, Jesus did not know everything written in the Book about himself, yet his consecration was complete. He had pledged his whole life to the doing of God's will. His own will was dead to all else. Later, he realized that his covenant meant also actual death as a malefactor.

The question has been asked, Did Jesus after his resurrection have human life-rights by reason of the fact that they were not relinquished in death, or by virtue of the fact that he had been appointed "heir of all things"?—Heb. 1:2.

This, like many other subjects, is capable of various shades of thought and expression. Our Lord possessed a right to human life and to all earthly things. This right to life and all its blessings Adam had forfeited by disobedience, but Jesus had secured it by obedience and held it absolutely free from risk of loss. Then, if some one, contrary to law, cut him off from his reign, this cutting off did not cause him to forfeit any of them.

In other words, we cannot see how anyone could deprive our Lord of his life-rights in a judicial way. To our understanding, Jesus was cut off from his life and from all the rights that pertained to it by a fanatical company of fallen men; but their action could not destroy any right which God's law had given to him. So, then, when God raised him from the dead and rewarded him with a higher nature and certain wonderful blessings connected therewith, this exaltation could not interfere with the RIGHT which God's LAW had given and which He had neither given away nor forfeited. He had merely allowed men to take his life from him, thus separating him from His RIGHTS, which remained his.

HOW OUR LORD BECOMES FATHER OF MANKIND

Since our Lord therefore had neither forfeited those rights nor given them away, then when God highly exalted him because of his obedience unto death, this right to human life was amongst the things that he possessed. This right was his irrespective of anything which the Father gave him. It is because he holds this right to human life as an asset—his legally and not as a gift—that he is said to be the LIFE-GIVER.

During the Millennial age, in fulfilment of the divine promise, our Lord will give mankind restitution to perfect human nature. In doing this he will not be giving something that the Father has given him, but he will be acting in a special sense in his own name. If he did not have this right to everlasting life to give, then he could not be spoken of as the LIFE-GIVER. But since he possesses this right to human life, it is his to bestow during the thousand years of his reign.

At the end of the thousand years our Lord will no longer be the Life-Giver. He cannot be the Life-Giver to angels nor to any other than mankind, for his right appertained merely to himself as a perfect human being. What he will give away to humanity in general, is what he now imputes, or loans, to the church, to permit us to share with him in sacrificial work and in his glorious work of the future.

RIGHT TO HUMAN LIFE OUR LORD'S PERSONAL GIFT TO MANKIND

We do not see how as "Heir of all things" our Lord could gain any additional control of his earthly nature and earthly life-rights which were his by obedience to the law. As heir of all things he will be the representative of the Father to all eternity. He takes the position at the right hand of authority on high. In due time, every knee shall bow to him, and even the angels shall be subjected unto him.

All these things came to our Lord as a part of the reward which the Father promised. But this one particular feature, the restitution of all things lost by Adam, is a special privilege coming as his own gift to humanity—that which he purchased at his own cost; that is to say, the laying down of his earthly life is the basis upon which he obtained the new nature and the right to control that earthly life, which shall be applied in restitution in behalf of the world.

If he had already applied that life and had actually given it up, then we do not see how he could accomplish anything special for mankind. But since he has this asset of earthly rights and privileges to give away, the process of bestowing it will continue during the Millennial reign; and what he will give is what he has by reason of his obedience to the law.—Lev. 18:5.

SCRIPTURAL USAGE OF THE TERM "SACRIFICE"

The word "sacrifice" may be used from different standpoints. If an animal were killed for some benevolent reason or purpose, it might be spoken of as a sacrifice, particularly if it were something done in harmony with the divine arrangement. But the mere killing of an animal would not be sacrifice. A dog might be killed without being sacrificed. But if the dog's life were surrendered for the purpose of scientific experiment, we might say that it was given in sacrifice to science. From this standpoint we should view the matter of sacrifice. The lives of God's consecrated people are surrendered for a purpose.

At our consecration we present our bodies as living sacrifices. We give up to the Lord our life, our human bodies and everything that we possess. It does not follow, however, that God accepts this sacrifice to be put to death in some special manner. Some may spend their lives in serving the Lord's truth, and may be said to be sacrificed as truly as though they had died at the stake. We may say to the Lord, All my life is in your hands; do with it as you please. If it means joy or pain, sacrifice or pleasure, we surrender our own will in the matter and become like unto Jesus, who said, "I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me."—John 6:38.

WHAT DO WE SACRIFICE?

The sacrifice of Jesus was made at Jordan, but it was finished at Calvary. His consecration was absolute. The killing of the bullock is symbolical of what Jesus did when he surrendered his will. And so with us. Following in his footsteps we become dead in the sense that we sacrifice our wills. But in what manner the Lord may accept that sacrificed will is his affair. We give it freely, that the mind of Christ may dwell in us richly.

We part forever with the right to our wills, but we do not sacrifice our lives, although we know that the giving up of our wills ultimately leads to the giving up of our lives. But we have nothing to do with the parting with our rights. When Jesus becomes our Advocate, he takes us in charge. From the time we give up our wills, our bodies are counted as his body. We merely give up our wills in the matter and leave everything for him to dispose of. He attends to the sacrificing; for he is the High Priest; we are not.

Similarly, the great outcome is in the Lord's hands. During the Gospel age he imputes of his merit to the church. When he has finished the work of sacrificing he will apply the merit of this great sacrifice, which he calls his own, for sealing the New Covenant for the world. But we have nothing to do with the sacrificing. We leave it all to our Attorney, or Advocate.

The new creature is certainly the owner, or controller, of the body and is made so by the Lord. We as new creatures have a work to perform with our body. When our Lord accepts us as his servants, we are to use all our talents as his stewards. In that sense of the word, the body will be under the control of the new creature until death.

LIFE-RIGHTS MERELY IMPUTED TO THE CHURCH

Our position is somewhat different from that of our Lord. We had no earthly life-rights to begin with; and we had, therefore, none to give away. They were forfeited by Adam's sin. But if we become the Lord's disciples, if we surrender all to him and accept the merit that he is willing to impute to us, our great Advocate will count us as members of his body and permit us to share in his sufferings. When he imputed his merit to us all rights passed to him. He gave his members whatever right

they have and whatever privilege of earthly right comes to them.

When it shall be necessary for our Lord to use these rights in the future for the world, he will be quite competent and privileged to do so. Having never violated the divine law he will have the full right to use, command and direct in respect to all of his earthly rights, which he did not forfeit, but which he laid down with the understanding that he should use them again in giving life to the world, so that he would be called the Father of mankind, in respect to their future life.

Nowhere in the Scriptures is the statement made that Christ came to sacrifice himself. What the Scriptures say is that he came to do the Father's will. He did not refuse to drink the "cup" which the Father prepared for him, but drank it to the dregs. And for his obedience to this will, even unto death—no matter how long or how short a time the Father should be pleased to have that life continue—he received the reward. He gave over all into the Father's hands. This was a sacrifice; for he had a right to use his life. But his obedience to his Father's will led to the sacrifice for which he obtained the reward.

FIVE LOAVES AND TWO FISHES

Mark 6:30-44.—Sept. 22.

Text:—*"Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life."*—John 6:35.

When the twelve apostles returned to Jesus they exclaimed, "Even the demons were subject to us in thy Name." But he said unto them, Rejoice not specially because of this, let your special rejoicing be that your names are written in heaven. They explained to Jesus the instance of their tour and what they had taught; and he called them away to a desert place to rest awhile, because of the crowd and because they had not even time to take nourishment. So they went privately to such a place by ship. But the news went also and the crowd went on foot from various cities.

Jesus would have no time to himself. His entire life was devoted and being rendered up a living sacrifice to the divine service, in feeding the sheep of Jehovah's flock, and, of course, his own sheep also, because all that were the Father's were his. As he looked upon the multitude, he felt a yearning compassion for them. He saw their needs: "They were like sheep without a shepherd"; and he continued to teach them.

But, says one, did they not have synagogues, and regular reading of the Scriptures? Did they not have scribes, Pharisees, priests and Levites? How could they be without shepherding? Ah, well, they had a soul-hunger, which the forms, ceremonies, rituals and burdens bound upon them could not satisfy. They were really wanting the "Bread of Life" which Jesus had —which Jesus was, for he personified the truth. Why then did they not receive it? What was their defense? They were bound by superstition, prejudice, the fear of man, traditions of the ancients, and the opposition of the great and the learned of their time.

Did they not frequently inquire, "Have any of the scribes and Pharisees believed on him?" Again, "Do our rulers indeed know that this is the very Christ?" The common people always referred to the learned. The learned therefore have the greater responsibility. Jesus declared of them, "Ye have taken away the key of knowledge"; you will neither enter into the favor of God yourselves, nor will you permit others to enter in who so desire.—Luke 11:52.

And is not this in a large measure true today also? The learned of the colleges and principal pulpits are telling the people that the Bible is not the divine message which Jesus and the Apostles declared it to be. They are telling the people that Moses and the prophets did not write the books accredited to them; and thus indirectly they are telling the people that Jesus and the apostles were deceived when Jesus said, "Moses wrote of me," and the Prophets Isaiah and Jeremiah said thus and so. Thus the people are becoming more and more unbelievers in respect to the Bible.

But what will the great and learned teachers of today give to the masses as a soul satisfying portion instead of the Bible? Oh, they tell us, "This is the good tidings, the Gospel: Your forefathers were apes; a law of Evolution prevails. As a result we have come as far as we are. We need no Savior, because we had no fall. We have no Redeemer, because if we were restored to our original condition it would make monkeys of us. God has allowed the law of Evolution to operate in you and in your children. You thus live in your children, and by and by will reach a very high plane of existence—not that you yourself will have any knowledge of that, for you will be dead, but your children will have that joy instead."

What is there in this to satisfy soul-hunger? Ah, nothing! No wonder the lament is going up all over Christendom that the public no longer care to go to church; that they can scarcely be bribed to go, even with the attractions of talented essays and choirs rendering operatic music, nor even be attracted by vaudevilles and worldly trash. Alas! what we need is that all of God's people should unite their hearts and voices in proclaiming the Gospel which Jesus and the apostles taught—the Gospel of the kingdom—Messiah's kingdom—and the glorious work it will accomplish for men, and the glorious privilege it will be to obtain a share in that kingdom. Surely then church attendance will be better and without any of the attractions and gewgaws now thought necessary. Let us with one heart and with one mind return to the Gospel message of the New Testament.

THE SYMPATHY OF JESUS

The multitudes in their enthusiasm went a long journey from home without making proper provisions for food. The disciples urged that the meeting break up and that the people be sent home. Jesus suggested, "Give ye them to eat." But they declared they had nothing wherewith to feed so many, and that if even they should go to purchase it would cost much for even one satisfying portion.

Finally they found five loaves and two fishes. By Jesus' direction they seated the multitudes in companies on the grass, and the five loaves and two fishes, under heavenly blessing, were divided and divided, again and again and again, until all had portions and ate to their satisfaction; and the fragments amounted to twelve baskets, while those who had partaken were 5,000.

This wonderful miracle not only attests our Lord's sympathy, but it also spoke volumes to the people of the divine power that was in the Great Teacher; but there is still another lesson which it teaches us. Like all of the miracles which Jesus performed it was merely another foregleaming, or illustration, of his coming glory and of the coming blessings. He who provided the nourishment for the 5,000 is shortly to be the Great King of Glory, whose kingdom will extend from shore to shore, and bring blessing and refreshment to all mankind.

This miracle speaks to us of the power that our Lord will then have for providing for the necessities of the whole world. True, we do not expect that during the reign of Christ the world will be miraculously fed, but rather in accordance with the Scriptural promise, "The earth shall yield her increase"; and again, "I will call for the wheat, and will increase it," etc., etc. But specially the feeding of the multitude reminds us of the fact testified in our text that Jesus is "The Bread of Life"—the divine provision for the necessities of the whole world.

"I AM THE BREAD OF LIFE"

As the church now partake of the merit of Christ's sacrifice, and become members of his body, the one loaf, and thus are made partakers of the eternal life through him, so in God's due time the bread from heaven is to feed the multitudes of earth. During the thousand years of his reign, the bread of life will be freely distributed amongst all mankind. That bread of life is the truth—particularly the truth related to and connected with the great redeeming work of Jesus. He is to be the Bread of Life to the world, because he bought the world with the sacrifice of his own life. The Bread that came down from Heaven they may all freely partake of and live.

The church, however, in this present time, has another privilege which the world in the future will not share, and that is represented in the Lord's "cup." His "cup" to us represents our privilege of suffering with him and becoming his joint-heirs in the kingdom.

TEACHING BY PARABLES ONLY

Matt. 13:34, 35, 55.—Sept. 29.

Text:—*"The words that I speak unto you, t hey are spirit and they are life."*—John 6:63.

Today's lesson declares, "All these things spake Jesus unto the multitudes in parables, and without a parable spake he not unto them; that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Prophet, I will open my mouth in parables; I will utter things which have been kept secret from the foundation of the world."

Bible students and Bible scholars have generally expressed

surprise that the Great Teacher, in harmony with the above Scripture, spoke always to the people in symbolic language, "dark sayings," the meaning of which they rarely understood. Another Scripture informs us that the reason was that the true invitation was not intended for the ordinary multitudes, but merely for the consecrated.

To those who accepted the Lord as the Savior, and who took upon themselves the required vow of faithfulness in walking in his footsteps unto death—these were granted special enlightenment, as it is written, "To you it is given to know the mystery of the kingdom of heaven, but to outsiders these things are spoken in parables, that they might not see and understand."

The simple explanation of the matter is that an understanding of spiritual things would do harm rather than good to those not spiritually begotten—to those not fully consecrated to the divine will. But with the views we once entertained, and which are voiced by all the creeds of the dark ages, none of the explanations would be tenable; because, according to those creeds, only the elect are to be saved, all the non-elect are to be lost, and the elect would be the only ones permitted to understand the things pertaining to the heavenly calling.

The entire matter is clarified when we recognize the difference between the salvation of the world to the human nature, during Messiah's reign of a thousand years, and the salvation provided for the elect, called during this age, and specially instructed and guided with the view of their making their calling and election sure.

THE APOSTLES JESUS' MOUTHPIECES

It has been claimed that the doctrines of Christianity can be better gleaned from the writings of the apostles than from the sayings of Jesus, as reported in the Gospels. There is considerable truth in this claim, and the reason is manifest; namely, Jesus' words were addressed mainly to the multitudes, and when he addressed the disciples he could not discuss even with them deep, spiritual truths, because they had not been begotten of the holy Spirit, and therefore could not understand spiritual things. Jesus himself declared, "I have many things to tell you, but ye cannot bear them now."

On one occasion our Lord's words were so deep, so highly figurative, that many of his followers left him, saying, "This is a hard (difficult) saying, who can understand it?" (John 6:60) The saying was, "Unless ye eat the flesh and drink the blood of the Son of Man, ye have no life in you." God's consecrated and spirit-enlightened people can understand that statement, but none others can even yet understand it. St. Paul explains the reason why, saying, "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God. . . . neither can he know them, for they are spiritually discerned."—1 Cor. 2:14.

"AFTER YE WERE ILLUMINATED"

St. Paul gives the key to the situation in one of his Epistles, saying, "After that ye were illuminated, ye endured a great fight of afflictions." (Heb. 10:32) The illumination received was the begetting of the holy Spirit. Similarly, the apostles at Pentecost received an illumination of the mind which enabled them to understand the things of God, yea, the deep things of God; for he hath given unto us his Spirit, "that we might know the things which are freely given us of God."—1 Cor. 2:12.

Jesus had this same thought in mind when he declared that there were certain things his disciples could not understand at that time, but would know afterwards, because he would send the holy Spirit, which would bring all things to their remembrance whatsoever he had spoken; and would show them things to come. (John 14:26; 16:13) This was not only true with the apostles, but has been true with respect to all the members of the body of Christ throughout this age. Each one presenting his body a living sacrifice has been accepted by the great Advocate, and presented as a part of his own offering; and then the offerer has been begotten of the holy Spirit to be a new creature in Christ.

It is to these new creatures that the statement is made, "All things are yours, for ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's." It is to these the Bible has promised, "He will show you things to come." It is these that are to be guided into all truth as it shall become due. It is for these that the Word of God is a storehouse, from which "things both new and old" are to be produced under the Spirit's guidance, as they become "meat in due season" to the "household of faith."

BABES IN CHRIST AND MEN

Along the same line we note the fact that even the spirit-begotten new creatures must make progress in their appreciation of spiritual things. The Apostle urges such that "As new born babes they should desire the sincere milk of the Word, that they might grow thereby." And the growth is necessary if they would attain joint-heirship in the kingdom; hence the Apostle again urges that each seek not to continue a babe, but to become a man, and to use the "strong meat" of divine truth. By becoming a man, he is sanctified, developed as a new creature and filled with the Spirit, and "thoroughly furnished unto every good work," by knowledge of the Word of God.

It must have been a difficult matter for our Lord, in teaching, to follow the rule which he gave to his disciples, namely, to "be wise as a serpent and harmless as a dove." Appreciating the divine plan fully, completely, he must frequently have had a yearning desire to tell his beloved followers more of the mysteries and deep things of the divine plan than they were able to appreciate.

"SPIRIT AND LIFE" WORDS

Now our text: "The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit and they are life." Here was another endeavor to impress his dear disciples with the thought that they should not take his words too literally, but should look for the deeper meaning. Furthermore, they were to remember that they could not expect to get that deep meaning until after the Master's ascension; as he said, "It is expedient for you that I go away; for if I go not away the holy Spirit will not come unto you; but if I go away I will send him unto you"; "for the holy Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified."—John 16:7; 7:39.

Jesus was not glorified because his glorification would not take place until his resurrection, and in a fuller sense until his ascension to the Most Holy on High, there to appear in the presence of God on our behalf—to make application of the merit of his sacrifice for those who have consecrated to walk in his steps.

It was, therefore, after they had been illuminated that the apostles and others of the church understood the meaning of this text, that the words of Jesus were spiritual and could be understood only by those possessing the spiritual key, the illumination of the holy Spirit.

The Master's words were "words of life" in the sense that they conveyed the great message of the terms upon which we may have everlasting life and become his joint-heirs. Although the apostles explain the philosophy of the divine plan in great detail, and mention more than did Jesus, yet in his sayings we find the very essence or kernel of the Gospel. Nowhere are the terms of discipleship more carefully laid down than in Jesus' words, because the disciples could understand what would be the meaning of the figures of self-denial, cross-bearing, and walking in his steps, even if they could not understand the philosophy of justification, sanctification, election and divine foreknowledge.

From Jesus' words more clearly than from any other words we get the thought of the "water of life," and how it is now in his followers a "spring" of truth, grace and everlasting life. Nowhere else do we more clearly get the general statement that the Father hath life in himself, and hath granted unto the Son life in himself, and that he might share this life with his disciples—with whomsoever he would. Thus, as St. Paul says, the words of this salvation in which we rejoice began to be spoken by our Lord. It is he also that declared that he brought life and immortality to light, thus distinguishing between the general reward of everlasting life to be given to the world, and the special reward to be granted to the church.

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THE NEW CREATURE'S RESPONSIBILITY TO DIVINE LAW

PART 1.

The Law Covenant was a covenant that God made with Israel, based upon the keeping of the law, which was briefly expressed in the Ten Commandments. The Apostle Paul says that our Lord was born under the law (Gal. 4:4); not under the Ten Commandments merely, but under the Law Covenant. This Law Covenant, the Apostle elsewhere shows, was that addition to the Abrahamic Covenant which was typified by Hagar and not by Sarah. Our Lord was under this Hagar Covenant, then—under the Law Covenant, the covenant of the flesh—up to the time when he was thirty years of age.

We have no record whatever respecting our Lord's obedience to the law before he became of age, although we have every reason to believe that he kept the Law Covenant. But the time of his special trial began at his baptism. The fact that God was willing to enter into a covenant of sacrifice with our Lord shows that he was perfect at that time. Our

Lord persisted in keeping the law during the time of his ministry, and at the same time sacrificed those rights which were his because of keeping the law perfectly until death.

With our Lord it was the same as with Adam. Jesus was perfect at the time of his baptism; therefore, no one could question his right to life. Consequently, God dealt with him as with One who had life rights. But as Adam was placed on trial to see whether he would prove faithful, so our Lord Jesus was on trial during the three and a half years of his ministry, to prove his worthiness to retain his life rights. If he had failed to keep the law any time during his ministry, he would have failed to have divine approval. Likewise if he had failed to keep his covenant of sacrifice he would have failed to make his calling and election sure.

CONDITION OF HEART TESTED CONTINUOUSLY

What our Lord did in this matter is on a parity with what each one of us does. We come to the Lord in the beginning and present ourselves living sacrifices. His acceptance of us and the imputation of his merit to us makes us perfect beings from the divine standpoint. Everyone who is perfect in the flesh has a right to life, according to the divine law. But the fact that we have a right to life for the moment, does not prove that it will be everlasting.

At the end of the thousand years of Christ's reign the world will be actually perfect. They will then be subjected to a testing to prove whether or not this perfection is deep and abiding, whether or not it is the permanent condition of their hearts. So it was with our Lord. Before his consecration he certainly had no such trials and contradictions of sinners against himself as he had afterwards. "Consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself." (Heb. 12:3) Practically all his trials began at the time of his consecration. We have no reason to suppose that our Lord was undergoing a trial for life or death before His consecration.

When our Lord was thirty years old, he was holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners. His trial, which was to prove his worthiness, began at his consecration and continued until his death. For three years and a half the spirit of his mind was being tested. If during that time he had committed any sin whatever, would he have been accepted of God then? Surely not! He was on trial, not as an old creature, but as a new creature, and his trial did not end until on the cross he cried, "It is finished!" This did not alter the fact, however, that he was still under the law. The law had dominion over him as long as he lived. As a new creature he did not have a body of the spirit kind. He had a human body, and was, therefore, responsible for everything that his human body would do.

It is just so with us. The body is reckoned dead in one sense of the word. As the Apostle says, "If ye be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above." Does this refer to us merely as new creatures? Yes. Is not our flesh reckoned dead? Yes, but we are figuratively raised from the dead. (Rom. 6:4, 5; Col. 3:1) To whatever extent our bodies fall short of perfect obedience, Christ, as the great Advocate, makes good. So if any of us sin, we have an Advocate with the Father. No matter how trivial the sin may be, it is a sin. God keeps no accounts with the flesh, but holds the new creature responsible. It is for these weaknesses of the flesh that the new creature goes daily to the Lord and says, "Forgive us our trespasses." We have an Advocate with God, and if we sin we may come to God and obtain grace in every time of need.—1 John 2:1; Heb. 4:16.

THE TWO-FOLD TRIAL OF THE NEW CREATURE

As we have seen, when our Lord made his consecration at his baptism, he was a perfect human being. When the Father accepted his sacrifice, he was begotten again; and he was to this degree a new soul, a new creature—spirit. But he had this treasure of the new mind in an earthen vessel, and the new creature was responsible for all that the old creature did. If the old creature had gotten him into trouble, the new creature would have been responsible.

As previously stated, our Lord was under the domination of the law as long as he lived. The question then arises, How long did he live as a man? Our answer is that in a very important sense of the word he died at the time of his baptism; that is to say, He died so far as his human will was concerned, but his human body did not die. His human body, therefore, was still as liable to every law as it had been before. He became a new creature in the spirit of his mind, but a new creature without a new body; and in the divine arrangement the new creature accepted and used the old earthly body, with all the responsibilities of that earthly body, whatever they might be.

In other words, the flesh has its law and its responsibilities. But as a new creature our Lord was under an additional law. We are not to understand that as a new creature he was released from the Ten Commandments. In his flesh he was a perfect human being, under the law. As a new creature he undertook to do more than merely keep the law; and so the new creature was on trial—not merely to prove whether the flesh would live up to the requirements of the law, but whether the flesh should be brought into subjection to the higher law of the new creation. Thus our Lord more than kept the law—not less than kept the law.

Jesus died to the Law Covenant, but not to the law, at the time that he made his consecration. He was not relieved from his responsibility to the law according to the flesh, but as a new creature he gave up all hope, all anticipation, as respects that Law Covenant. When he gave up the human nature he would have no use for that which applied to the human nature, which he was giving up in order to get something better. Therefore, he died to the Law Covenant, not because he could not keep it, but because by becoming dead to that covenant he might become alive to the covenant of sacrifice. The blessings of that Law Covenant would have been merely earthly life. So when our Lord consecrated himself, he sacrificed everything that went with the Law Covenant.

NO ADVOCATE FOR OUR LORD

If our Lord's human nature had failed to keep the law, the new creature would have been held responsible. It is the same with us, as we have illustrated before in the case of a man and his dog. The new creature is like the man and the old creature like the dog. But the man is responsible for the dog. If the dog does damage or bites anyone, the owner is responsible. God has made a special arrangement for us, however, by which we may go to the throne of heavenly grace for the imperfections of the flesh, because we have an Advocate. But Jesus had no Advocate; and therefore any misdeed on the part of his flesh would be charged to him directly, as he would be responsible for all the flesh might do.

As we have seen, our Lord at thirty years of age was a perfect man, accountable under the Law Covenant. When he had made a consecration and when that consecration had been accepted by the Father, he was counted alive as a new creature and reckoned dead as an old creature. These facts should not cause us to lose sight of the other fact that he was not really a new creature, but merely begotten to a new nature, and that he would not be entirely free from the earthly nature until he was actually dead.

So, then, as a new creature our Lord was responsible for all of God's laws that applied to him as a man. The fact that he had given up all the earthly hopes and ambitions and privileges did not give him liberty to violate the law of God; and therefore his passing from under the Law Covenant did not give him liberty to break the law.

Even so with us. We cannot trespass against our neighbor in any degree. The fact that we have become new creatures in Christ makes us still more responsible for good behavior. We have need of the Lord's covering merit for every fleshly imperfection that we have. The very fact that we have need of that covering for our fleshly imperfections shows that our every thought, word and action are taken cognizance of by God; and since we are still imperfect, an arrangement is provided for us by which we may go to the throne of grace and have our weaknesses covered by our Lord's merit.

GRAVE RESPONSIBILITY RESTING ON OUR LORD

But our Lord had nothing to shield him. Although he had given up all hope of human life, that he might have the spiritual blessings, yet he was responsible for every feature of the divine law.

The divine law has always existed. God always had certain laws of right and wrong. He himself is under a law of righteousness. Our Lord Jesus and all the holy angels are subject to a law of righteousness. What ceased at our Lord's consecration was the covenant promise of life which was based upon that law and which had been won by our Lord. Since no imperfect being can keep that law, another arrangement is made for us—a sacrificial arrangement, based upon our Lord's merit, imputed to us. "Gather my saints together unto me; those who have made a covenant with me by sacrifice."—Psa. 50:5.

From the divine standpoint our Lord kept the law as a new creature; from the human standpoint he kept it as an earthly creature. To God we are one thing; to men we are another. Before God Jesus had the standing of the new creature. But he did not keep the law merely in the spirit. He kept it in the letter as well. As for ourselves, we cannot keep the letter of the law, but we must keep the spirit of it.

Our Lord, being perfect, kept the law both in spirit and in letter. Every act of obedience to the law was credited to the new creature, and any failure would have brought death. Even though the account was entered in the name of the new creature, these acts of obedience were only credited to it. Just as a parent might put into the bank money for a child, the child does not have the money and cannot receive it until he becomes of age; so with our Lord. Everything that he did was put to his credit. And if he had done anything wrong, it would have been charged to the new creature. "The wages of sin is death."—Rom. 6:23.

CHANGE OF NATURE A GRADUAL PROCESS

But had our Lord remained under the Law Covenant, He would not have become the heir; for the child of the bondwoman could not become heir with the son of the freewoman. (Gal. 4:30) The son of the freewoman was the new creature.

When our Lord made the covenant of sacrifice at Jordan he passed from his position under the Law Covenant and from his fleshly relationship to Abraham, into the spiritual relationship and became the spiritual "Seed" of Abraham; for there he sacrificed all the blessings and favors which were his under the Law Covenant.

But we are to remember that in our Lord's case, this change of nature required three and a half years. He did not pass instantaneously from one relationship to the other, but by a process in which he was dying daily and also becoming alive daily. He had accepted the terms of the covenant of sacrifice. During those three and one-half years, he was in the process of transfer from the Law Covenant to the Sacrificial Covenant. After he had fulfilled the terms of that covenant, he was put to death in the flesh, and quickened in the spirit. (1 Peter 3:18. R. V.) But he did not enter into the glorious station typified by Isaac until after his resurrection from the dead.

So it is with us. We renounce the earthly that we may share in the heavenly. But the change requires a period of time, during which we are dying daily and becoming more alive daily. We shall be made fully alive only in our resurrection, for flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God. (1 Cor. 15:50) While this change is not instantaneous, but by degrees, yet the Father dealt with our Lord from the moment of his consecration, and so he deals with us. We have the foretaste of the blessing now, but it will not be ours completely until the sacrifice shall have been finished. Our Lord's baptism did not constitute him The Christ in the full sense of the word, but he was declared to be The Christ with power when he was raised upon the spirit plane.—Rom. 1:4.

PURPOSE OF OUR LORD'S SUFFERING

The Scriptures give us to understand that our Lord's sufferings produced a variety of results. First of all, those sufferings were in fulfilment of the law, and by them he testified his obedience to the law of God. He suffered for well-doing and not for evil-doing. Second, it was appropriate that he should prove to God his loyalty and faithfulness, so as to establish his worthiness to be made the great Messiah and to be granted the great power and glory which Messiah will exercise.

The Apostle Paul gives us this particular thought, when he says that it pleased God to make the Captain of our salvation perfect through suffering. (Heb. 2:10) At the same time this suffering would demonstrate our Lord to be the great Messiah who would eventually lead the people out of sin and death. The Apostle also intimates that his sufferings were expedient and wise for the assistance of those who would be his followers, when he says that this High Priest was touched with a feeling of our infirmities, that he might be able to sympathize with those who are in trouble. He was faithful himself, having gone through various trials and testings.—Heb. 4:15.

When mankind come to know how it was that Messiah assumed control of the world, all humanity will have full confidence in him—not only in the power with which he will rule his kingdom, but also in his justice, his love and his mercy. He has been tempted in all points as the church is, and therefore, not only can we have the benefit resulting from his experience, but the whole world in the future may also have an opportunity to appreciate it.

The sufferings of Jesus became a witness both to angels and to men. He gave the demonstration of the full extent of loyalty even unto death. As a reward the Father did not give him merely the high position that he had at first, but exalted him to his own right hand in the heavenly places, "Far above all principality and power and might and dominion, and every name that is named" (Eph. 1:21); even to the divine nature. All this was a part of the Father's great plan; and by our Lord's experiences we see that the Heavenly Father has demonstrated his justice, his power and his love in a most marvelous way.

THE CHURCH'S EXPERIENCES SIMILAR TO OUR LORD'S

Our Lord's perfecting, indeed, was a little different from ours, and yet there is a similarity between the two. He was still perfect as the Man Christ Jesus, who gave himself; but as a result of his consecration he received a begetting of the holy Spirit to the divine nature, and his development as a new creature required that he faithfully carry out his vow, or covenant, of sacrifice, in the doing of the will of the Heavenly Father. By such faithfulness he perfected himself on the divine plane—that is, he proved himself worthy according to the covenant—"Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power and riches and wisdom and strength and honor and glory and blessing."—Rev. 5:12.

Similarly the followers of Jesus are to be sharers with him of the sufferings of this present time and in the glories which shall follow, for "If we suffer [with him] we shall also reign with him." (2 Tim. 2:12) Although we are imperfect in the flesh, while he was perfect, yet the robe of his righteousness, the merit of his sacrifice, covers all of our blemishes and makes us, as his footstep followers, holy and acceptable before the Father, as joint-sacrificers with Jesus.

The begetting of the holy Spirit starts us in the life divine. We are not to be perfected in the flesh, but in the spirit; and our perfection and acceptance with the Father will be demonstrated by our loyalty of heart and the fulness and thoroughness with which we submit our all to the divine will and seek to glorify God in our bodies and spirits, which are his. Our justification comes to us as a reward of faith, regardless of works, but our glorification will follow only as a reward for faithfulness—"Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life."—Rev. 2:10.

(*Continued in next issue.*)

FEET-WASHING AS A LESSON IN HUMILITY

"Ye also ought to wash one another's feet."—John 13:14.

We remember the occasion on which our Lord washed the feet of his disciples. The Lord and his twelve apostles had met in the upper room to commemorate the Passover supper. This feast was followed by the inauguration of the Memorial supper, the bread and wine of which represented the body and the blood of our Lord Jesus. The disciples, full of the enthusiasm which had been incited for some days previous, were all at a loss to understand the sadness of our Lord Jesus. While he was saying, "My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death" (Matt. 26:38) and desiring that his baptism might be accomplished, they were inclined to think that he was taking a pessimistic view of matters.

During the five preceding days the disciples had witnessed the feast in the house of Lazarus, Martha and Mary, the breaking of the alabaster box of ointment, the riding on the ass, and the spreading of palm branches for the little animal to walk on, and the demonstration of the people, who had cried, "Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord; Hosanna in the highest!" (Matt. 21:9) They had heard the Pharisees ask Jesus to put a stop to this demonstration. But he had said to them that if these people should hold their peace the very stones would cry out. (Luke 19:40) To fulfil the prophecy (Zech. 9:9) there must be a shout, and there was a shout.

We remember that the little company went to the Temple, that the whole city was in commotion, that the rulers were impressed, and that they were afraid of the people. We remember that Jesus had gone into the Temple and had driven out those who sold merchandise; that when the Pharisees, the Sadducees and others tried to make Jesus appear confused, he had wisely turned all their arguments upon themselves; and that they dared not ask him any more questions, for by so doing they would only make a bad matter worse.

From all these things it must have seemed to the Apostles that they were on the eve of attaining great prominence and that Jesus would be exalted. Therefore, they could not understand his attitude of sorrow. As an evidence, we have the fact that James and John went to Jesus and asked about the place they might occupy in the kingdom. Could they be next to him? There was no doubt in their minds that the kingdom was near. They specially loved him and would like

to have the favor of being near him. Others might not care so much where they were placed, but James and John would like to be close to the Master.

These were the thoughts uppermost in their minds. As a result, when they came to the upper room, they had not the humility of mind to take thought of serving. No doubt it was the custom of the Jews to have a servant to minister to the comfort of the guests. But there was no servant here and not one of them had the humility of mind to offer to be the servant. Apparently they not only did not have the disposition to serve one another, but they did not desire to wash even the Master's feet.

SELFISHNESS EVEN IN LOVE

Since it is difficult for us to gage our own hearts thoroughly, we should use great charity in measuring the hearts and intentions of others, and should err on the side of too great sympathy and leniency rather than on that of too strong condemnation. Doubtless had the Apostles been asked as to their motives and conduct, they would have denied that these were selfish, and would have spoken only of their zeal for the Lord and their desire to be near him. This illustrates to us what the Scriptures declare, that the human heart is exceedingly deceitful, and that it requires careful scrutiny, lest under the cloak of good motives, it harbors qualities which, if recognized, it would spurn.

Apparently our Lord let the matter go to its full limit to see whether or not any of his followers would improve the opportunity to make himself servant of all. He waited until supper was being served (not ended as in our common Version); then, arising from the table, he laid aside his mantle and got a basin and a towel. Then, girding up his garments to keep them from getting into the water, he proceeded to wash their feet.

We can well imagine the consternation of the apostles as they watched the procedure, and then saw the Lord go from the feet of one to those of another, as they protruded from the couches on which the apostles reclined. The method of feet-washing at that time was different from that of today. The water was poured from a pitcher in a small stream upon the feet, which were washed and rinsed. The basin was merely a receptacle for receiving the soiled water.

OUR LORD'S ACT A DEEP SPIRITUAL LESSON

This act was a pointed reproof for their neglect to wash his feet and one another's. They were all silent until he came to St. Peter. When our Lord paused before him, St. Peter said, "Thou shalt never wash my feet!" St. Peter had too much reverence to wish the Lord to be his servant. He had as a natural trait, more than had some of the others, that courage, or boldness, which led him to speak out. But the Lord said to him, "If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me." (John 13:8) St. Peter did not understand how this washing would give him a part with the Lord, but he said eagerly, "Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head," if this gives me a more particular part with you. The Lord answered him, "He that is washed needeth not save to wash his feet, but is clean every whit." I am doing all that is necessary. What I am doing you do not understand now, but you shall understand hereafter.—See verses 7-10.

In all this the Lord was giving a deep spiritual lesson—that no one is naturally fit for the kingdom. Each one needs to be washed, to be cleansed, before he can be a joint-sufferer, before he can be a joint-heir. He must be a joint-sacrificer in order to become a member of The Christ. Jesus said to his disciples, You have witnessed my humility in this matter, and now I want to tell you that you ought to have this attitude toward one another. You should have been careful for even the humblest one in your number. Whether or not it was by washing my feet and those of all the others, you should have done whatever was necessary for the refreshment of the company.

THE ACT NOT THE INSTITUTION OF A CEREMONY

We are to remember that things were different then from what they are today. Because of the wearing of sandals, the feet would be considerably soiled even after only a short journey and would, therefore, need refreshing. It was the custom that the servant should come forth and make the guests comfortable—not to the inconvenience of the traveler, but to his further comfort. This was a menial service, which afforded Jesus the opportunity to impress upon his apostles the lesson of the necessity of humility in all the members of the body of Christ.

We do not get a lesson of the institution of a formal ceremony. It was only a case of necessity, of which the Lord took advantage to give a lesson of humility. No such need exists with us today. Our streets are paved and we wear shoes that are closely laced and are sufficient protection. So there is no necessity to wash each other's feet, at a public gathering, to have a public exhibition of feet-washing.

The incident affords a lesson in humility to us as well as it afforded one to the apostles. We should be glad to do any service, even to the humblest of the members of Christ, in whatever way the opportunity may come. There is no suggestion in the Scriptures that feet-washing was ever done as a ceremony. We have an intimation, however, that feet-washing was a custom in Palestine. In 1 Tim. 5:9-16, we read that if a widowed sister had washed the saints' feet, meaning that if she had shown such a disposition, St. Paul would advocate a special care for such a sister in need; for she had manifested a loyal and true spirit.

There are some very good Christian people who have adopted feet-washing as a religious custom. We are not to berate them unnecessarily for following their consciences. Rather we should say to them that so long as they think they are doing the Lord's will, they are right to follow the custom; but that the Scriptures relate only this one case where the feet-washing was done in public, and it was very unlikely, therefore, that it was ever done in public by the church except on this occasion. As the commandment, "Thou shalt not kill," has a deeper meaning than that one shall not take the life of another, so this washing of feet has a deeper meaning. Throughout his ministry Jesus indicated the deeper thought by his treatment of others. He lightened the burden and happified the condition of those with whom he came in contact. So we should do all in our power for the consecrated ones, members of Christ's body.

OUR RESPONSIBILITY TO ONE ANOTHER

This lesson suggests that the members of Christ's body should have a mutual watch-care over one another's welfare; to keep each other pure, holy, clean and to assist one another in overcoming the trials, temptations and besetments of this present evil world, arising from the three sources of temptation—the world, the flesh and the devil. Only as we cultivate the various graces of the Spirit—meekness, gentleness, patience, brotherly-kindness, love—can we hope to be specially helpful to others in putting on these adornments of character and purities of life, and in getting rid of the defilements of the world and of the flesh.

It requires peculiar qualifications to enable us to assist each other in this respect. Before we can help others to cleanse their way of life in every little particular, so that every thought, word and deed shall be brought into subjection to the divine will, it is necessary that we have experience along the same lines. Only as we cultivate purity of thought, word and deed in our own lives, only as we put on the various graces of the Spirit, can we wash the feet of the saints.

Many who would reject well-meant criticism of conduct, who would resent well-meant offers of assistance to a higher standard of character, as interferences with their private business, would be very amenable to the influence of the same person if he approached them with such evidences of true devotion and loving interest as would be indicated by the performance of some menial act. It is the sympathetic ones who are most successful in helping the various members of the body of Christ out of the besetments and difficulties incident to the following of the Lord in the present time. Oh, let us study and strive and pray that we may be very successful in obeying the Master's injunction, "Ye also ought to wash one another's feet!"

How many opportunities we have for comforting, refreshing, consoling and assisting one another in some of the humblest affairs of daily living or in respect to some of the unpleasant duties, experiences or trials of life! By love we are to serve one another, but not as a mere formality. Any service done or attempted to be done in love, with the desire to do good to one of the Lord's people, has, we may be sure, the approval of the Head of the church.

Let us lose no opportunities of this kind; let us remember the Master's example. Let us not merely assume the guise of humility, but let us actually have that grace of character which will enable us to do kindnesses and service to all with whom we come in contact. Then we shall all the more enjoy this privilege as we find the needy ones to be members of the body of Christ—The Christ.

"A CUP OF COLD WATER"

[Reprinted from issue of June 15, 1896, which please see.]

[5091]

"ANOTHER VOICE FROM HEAVEN"

"Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues."—Rev. 18:4.

The revelation of our Lord to St. John is a book of signs, in which the things stated symbolize the things meant. To illustrate: In this book a woman is used to represent a church—a pure woman a pure church, a false woman an apostate church. In Rev. 17:1-6 a picture is given of a false woman, disloyal to her engagement, and therefore no longer worthy to be the bride of Messiah. This unfaithful woman is branded "Babylon." We read that she sat upon a beast, a symbolic statement of her control of the power at Rome.

In her hand this woman held a golden cup full of abominations, and thus symbolically she is represented as making all nations drunk with the wine of false doctrine. The cup suggests that the unfaithful church, symbolized by this woman, had once been the receptacle of divine truth—"Babylon hath been a golden cup in the Lord's hands." (Jer. 51:7) In Revelation 17:5 she is called "The Mother of Harlots"—a term suggesting a mother church, and daughter churches which are said to closely resemble the mother. As the mother was called "Babylon," the daughters—so like their mother—bear also the family name.

BABYLON—MOTHER AND DAUGHTERS

All about us we see the fulfilment of this prophecy. We see that the daughter systems have proceeded out of the mother system; that they are all developed from her. In Pittsburgh, some years ago, a very prominent Presbyterian minister said, "Wince as you will, you must admit that this [the Catholic church] is the Mother church. She possesses an unbroken history extending back to the times of the apostles. For every fragment of religious truth which we prize, we are indebted to her as the depository. If she has no claim to being the true church, then are we bastards and not sons."

A fair examination of the denominations shows that they are more or less in sympathy with the mother system. Revelation 18 traces the history of the Apostate church and foretells that Babylon—both Papal and Protestant systems—will fall. But the Lord has a true church, to which he says, "Come out of her, my people!" In other words, the saints of God are scattered throughout the denominations. But now, in the closing of the age, God sends forth the message that his people shall no longer remain in the denominations; for the time is coming when the doom of Babylon will be upon her and she will fall.—Isa. 13:1-22.

PROPHECY A GRAPHIC PICTURE OF HISTORY

When we examine the Scriptures with the purpose of understanding prophecy, we find that during the Jewish age, God made various types and pictures. The Jews themselves were typical. The Scriptures also show that there are two Israels, one of which is to be as the "stars of heaven" and the other as the "sand of the seashore." (Gen. 22:17; Isa. 8:14; 1 Cor. 10:18; Gal. 6:16) Natural Israel was used of God to make types of the spiritual things—the "better things." Their Jubilee years were types of the antitypical Jubilee of better times; their Levitical priesthood was a type of the Priesthood in glory, etc.

During the great Babylonian captivity the Jews were compelled to live in Babylon, to be a part of her, to support her, although their bondage was not severe. So today God's people are required to stay in Mystical Babylon, be a part and parcel of Babylon; to support some of her wards and denominations. Therefore it becomes a difficult matter to flee out of Babylon. But we find in the Scriptures graphic pictures of what is coming upon Mystic Babylon, and those who would escape must flee. As Cyrus, a type of Christ, overthrew Babylon, so a part of the work of the second advent will be the overthrow of antitypical Babylon.—Jer. 51:6; Rev. 18:21.

BABYLON THE SYMBOL OF CONFUSION

Originally "Babylon" signified "Gate of God." But the word came subsequently to have the meaning of confusion, mixture; and in this sense it is used in the Revelation. Babylon is a symbol of confusion. God's people in Babylon are dishonored; they are held in restraint. Now, through the prophecy we hear the command, "Come out of her, my people!" This call applies not only to those in Babylon the Great, but to those in other denominations—mother and daughters. "Come out of her, my people, that we be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues." (Rev. 18:4) Be not of those who cannot see the errors of Babylon and who, consequently, are not of the called ones.

The object of the call to come out is not for people merely to withdraw from a nominal church; but whenever any true Christian comes to see the error in which he has been held, and which Babylon has taught, he will see that he will misrepresent not only himself and the denomination to which he belongs, but also the Heavenly Father and the Word of God, if he remains connected with what he sees to be error. As he realizes his position, the voice of the Lord through his Word tells him that he must stand for truth and righteousness.

No one is called out of Babylon until he sees her true condition. So then, never urge anyone to come out of Babylon; for if they have "ears to hear," God's voice tells them plainly to take this step, and gives the reason why they should do so. This Book of Revelation shows us by symbols that dire trouble is coming upon Babylon. The nominal church claims that Christ's kingdom was set up hundreds of years ago. Consequently, they are not looking for Christ to come to establish his kingdom, for they think that he set up his kingdom at the time of his first advent.

"GATHER MY SAINTS TOGETHER UNTO ME"

The expression, "Come out of her," signifies that the Lord's people are to separate from all things which are in conflict with the divine Word. We are to come out of the errors and systems of error which are contrary to the Word of God. But we are not to organize another denomination, for the original call was to membership in the body of Christ.

"Come out of her, my people," is a call to associate with Christ, with Messiah. This call is given by the Lord through the Prophet when he says, "Gather my saints together unto me; those that have made a covenant with me by sacrifice." (Psa. 50:5) They were to be gathered, not to the Roman or other systems, but to the Lord, to become one with him. Therefore they could not be gathered to all these different denominations, nor to any one of them. Those who hear the call should come out of Babylon and take their stand with the Lord. They are no longer to be mis-representatives of God and of themselves.

Those who see these things and have sufficient courage will come out. Those who see these things and lack the courage to come out are more responsible than are the majority of people who are in Babylon, but who do not see. If those who see do not have sufficient courage to obey the Lord, they will surely receive of her plagues by remaining in, and will probably have a large share in the punishments of the day of vengeance.

MANY BECOMING IRRELIGIOUS

Many people who have been identified with the different denominations are not coming into the truth, but are becoming irreligious. They are by no means bad people; and they feel convinced that there has been a great error connected with Christianity. They repudiate much that Babylon does and says. Babylon claims that she has civilized the world; but she forgets that civilization existed before Christianity began. She forgets that Jews are just as civilized as Christions; and that Mohammedans are more temperate than many so-called Christians. By no means do we wish to say anything against whatever good people have received from her. If they get a still further blessing, they will probably find that while the blessing which they previously had was better than a message from heathendom, yet Babylon's best is far inferior to the truth, the light.

Dearly beloved, we are permitted to enjoy wonderful things! By the grace of God, we are privileged to see the meaning of things that were once mysterious, not only to us, but to our parents. While some in Babylon are going into infidelity, some out of Babylon are becoming stronger spiritually, entering by hope "into that which is within the veil." If Christ is our Forerunner, we shall enter there with him. To do so will mean to become partakers of The Messiah, by becoming the bride of Messiah, as symbolically represented. The true church is to become associated with Christ in his kingdom. Then will come the promised blessings to "all the families of the earth."

As we perceive the consistency of the divine plan of the ages, our hearts are full of thanksgiving to God. We see that the new dispensation will be ushered in with "a time of trouble such as never was"; and that this time of trouble is located, among other ways, by that prophecy which tells that "Many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased"; that there will be a time of trouble; but that "the wise shall understand." From what source do the wise receive their instruction? They will understand according to the wisdom from on high—in humility accepting the divine Word and being blessed in so doing.—Dan. 12:4, 10.

WHO MAY FALL FROM GRACE

One who is down cannot fall. Originally Father Adam was up; that is to say, he was perfect, created in God's likeness, free from sin. He was in God's favor, and while in that condition, he was on trial for life or death. He sinned and fell from favor into disfavor—condemnation, death. His posterity, the whole human race, have been born in God's disfavor. They are fallen. As we read, "I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me." (Psa. 51:5) By nature mankind are all children of wrath. They cannot fall any further down; for as it is written, "The whole world lieth in the evil one."—1 John 5:19.—Diaglott.

But something occurred which has raised a portion of the race of mankind from the fallen condition. Christ came into the world, gave his life a ransom-price, and ascended into heaven "to appear in the presence of God." (Heb. 9:24) Thus far, however, he has appeared only for us, not for the world, but for all those who have trusted in the precious blood of Christ. His appearance for these enables them to approach God, to become disciples of Christ and to receive the begetting of the holy Spirit.

This is the attitude in which we stand: we have accepted the Redeemer, we are seeking to walk in his steps, we are lifted up out of condemnation, we are no longer dead in Adam. "You hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins." (Eph. 2:1, 2) Once we were strangers and foreigners, but having been "made nigh by the blood of Christ" we are now members of the body of Christ. (Eph. 2:12, 13) So, then, we are children of God by adoption.

After Adam had fallen, he was regarded as an enemy of God. But we have come near to God through Christ. We are "accepted in the Beloved," accounted worthy of life everlasting, if we are faithful; for eternal life is the gift of God. (Eph. 1:6; Rom. 6:23) The church, then, have come back from the fallen state; but the world remains in that condition and, therefore, cannot fall. The only ones who can do so are those who are the recipients of the holy Spirit.

The manner of life here during the present existence may indeed affect the opportunity and future destiny of the world. If they knowingly violate obligations, they sin against light and they injure their characters; but they cannot sin away their share of the merit of Christ's sacrifice, for they have not yet received that share. Only the consecrated children of God are in the position to do so; as the Apostle points out, "It is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the holy Spirit, and have tasted the good Word of God and the powers of the world to come, if they shall fall away, to renew them again to repentance."—Heb. 6:4-6.

This thought will well bear repetition: The only class that can fall away are those who have been made partakers of the holy Spirit; but if any of those who have been brought into full harmony with God, through the begetting of the holy Spirit, neglect or misuse their blessed privilege, there remains for them no more an interest in the great Atonement; because they have received their portion in Christ's redemptive work.

KNOWLEDGE BRINGS RESPONSIBILITY

The only evidence there is at the present time that we are begotten of the holy Spirit is the fact that we have "received the spirit of adoption whereby we cry, Abba, Father." (Rom. 8:15) The world, having had no life in them, cannot lose what they never possessed. But as for us, "If we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries. He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses. Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy who hath trodden the Son of God under foot and hath counted the blood of the covenant wherewith he was sanctified an unholy thing and hath done despite unto the spirit of grace?"—Heb. 10:26-29.

Only those who have been sanctified through the blood of the Covenant can do despite to it. Only those who have a knowledge of the Son of God can "trample him under foot." The world in its ignorance cannot do these things. So, "If we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth" (not if the world sin wilfully, but if we sin wilfully), there remaineth no longer a share for us in the sacrifice of Christ.

For the others, there would still remain their share in the sacrifice of Christ, and their responsibility will be in proportion to their knowledge. We have large responsibility, because we have large knowledge. We have tasted of the holy Spirit, we have been made partakers of it. The Apostle says that "those who despised Moses' law died without mercy." There was nothing more for them then. They did not get eternal torment for disobedience to Moses, but theirs was the death penalty. Those who thus died will, nevertheless, have their share in the redemptive work of Christ.

Those who died under the law will eventually have an opportunity to receive God's grace in Christ Jesus. But if they were cut off from life under the typical penalty of death, how much more severe would the penalty be upon those who have the understanding and enlightenment through the antitypical Moses—Christ! The intimation of the Scriptures is that such will die the second death for wilful disobedience. For such there is no hope of recovery whatever. Let this solemn thought be made emphatic. There will be a recovery from the death by Moses' law. But for those who die the second death, there will be nothing further. They have had their share in the Atonement. They have counted the blood of the covenant with which they were sealed an unholy thing. "Christ . . . . dieth no more!"—Rom. 6:9.

CHARACTERISTICS OF A SOUND MIND

"God has not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind."—2 Tim. 1:7.

In this text St. Paul is addressing the children of God—those who have left the world, who have turned their backs upon the things of sin and selfishness, who have been begotten of the holy Spirit because of full consecration to God and to whom the Advocate has imputed his merit. They have received of his Spirit, the new mind, and so have the spirit of a sound mind.

In the beginning of the Gospel age there were marked manifestations of the holy Spirit, known as "the gifts of the Spirit" (1 Cor. 12:4-11), such as knowledge, healing, miracles, tongues, etc. These gifts were bestowed at that time for two reasons: first, to witness who were God's people; and second, to confirm the faith of the early church. They were necessary that the church might have a start, so to speak.

The Apostle says that these miraculous gifts were to continue only for a time, but that the fruits of the spirit were to abide—meekness, patience, gentleness, brotherly, kindness, faith, hope and love the greatest of all. (1 Cor. 13) The gifts of the Spirit died out with the death of the apostles and of those also upon whom they had conferred the gifts. But the fruits and graces remain to this day.

Just as soon as we have been begotten of the holy Spirit a transforming work begins with us. But in general the reception of the Spirit is at first without marked manifestation. We grow in knowledge, love and all the fruits of the Spirit, in proportion as we have received the holy Spirit, which is given in order to develop our minds and hearts to do a transforming work, bringing forth the fruitage of the spirit in our characters and our lives. With some of us the fruitage develops rapidly; with others, slowly.

The grape-vine gives us gifts in that it bears grapes. As fruit-bearing in nature is in one sense of the word a miracle, so also are the fruits and graces of the Spirit which show in our lives, but which are such a gradual development that they do not seem to be miraculous.

The Lord is the true Vine and his true disciples are the branches. The Spirit of the Vine must permeate all the branches, and the fruit of the Vine must appear on every branch. The one thing necessary to remember is that our ultimate blessing and acceptance of the Father depends upon our abiding continually in this blessed relationship of branches in the Vine and our bearing fruit. If we fail to do this, we shall not remain in this relationship. But if we bear the fruits of the Spirit abundantly, we shall some day be branches in the glorified Vine—The Christ of God.

FEAR A FORM OF SELFISHNESS

In our text the Apostle is discussing the character of this Spirit which God has given us. It is not the spirit of fear, nor the spirit of dread, nor the spirit of timidity. Where the spirit of selfishness goes, there is more or less fear accompanying it. We can realize that with our first parents the spirit of fear led them to hide themselves from the Lord. We recall that Cain feared and fled. (Gen. 3:10; 4:14) So all down through the ages, the spirit of fear has exerted a powerful influence upon mankind. If a storm

comes up, many people act as if they feared that it was something sent especially after them.

All fear, being a manifestation of one form of selfishness, is made up of the elements of self-love. People fear lest they may lose some of the things which they selfishly desire to retain. The spirit of many of the heathen as well as many in Christian lands is a spirit of fear. They are serving God, not from a desire to be co-laborers in his work, but from fear. They have been taught that they ought to go to church. They know not what God might do to them if they were to neglect to go. Some ministers have said, "If I believed, as you do, that there is no eternal torture, I would do all the wicked things imaginable." They show by these words that they are not impulsed by a holy Spirit, but by a spirit of fear, a spirit that belongs to sin. The spirit of fear does not come from God.

There is, of course, a holy fear—a fear to do anything to offend God or to offend a friend. And we ought to be afraid of offending a friend, afraid of hurting or injuring a friend or anybody. If we love our Heavenly Father, we ought to fear to do anything to displease him.

In Hebrews 4:1 the Apostle says, "Let us fear, lest a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it." Let us not fear evil—but let us fear lest we fail to attain the blessings promised to the overcomers. God will give those blessings only to those who reach a certain development of character. But the fear of the world is wholly improper. If any of the Lord's people have that fear, they have received it from some other source than the spirit of Truth.

TRANSFORMING INFLUENCE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

The Apostle proceeds to tell us what this Spirit of the Lord has brought to us. It has been a spirit of power, of strength. All who are seeking to walk after the Spirit and have a knowledge of the Lord's love—these he will not forsake, but will deliver them from evil. These have a courageous spirit, or influence of mind proceeding from this spirit of power. It gives them such energy that they are able to do more than otherwise they could. They astonish themselves. They have the peace of God to work in them to will and to do his good pleasure.—Phil. 2:13.

Those who receive the truth are very different from what they were before they had received its spirit; and as a rule their neighbors and friends discern the change. Where a wife comes to the knowledge of the truth, her husband is often surprised to find how much more firmness she has for everything that is right. This firmness is not a spirit of arrogance, but a spirit of assurance that God is able and willing to work things together for good. It is the same with the husband. Many wives have seen how much the truth has strengthened the husband. This change is due to the spirit of power which the Lord has given his people. In proportion as we get this spirit, we get this power. Of course, some characters are naturally strong, but the truth will make them stronger. Others naturally weak are made so much stronger that they surprise their friends and neighbors.

All who have been in the school of Christ seem to make like development. They become better people than they have ever been before. They are not necessarily better looking, but the Spirit of the Lord helps them to keep their clothes tidy and neat. It helps them to be more particular as to what they say and how they say it. It influences their words, actions, conduct—everything. It makes them more patient, brotherly-kind. All these qualities are manifested increasingly.

Some who have been a little while in the Lord's service have been remarked upon by others. They say, "These are a very intelligent people. Where did they get their vocabulary? They are not well educated, yet how much they know of affairs in the world! They seem to have a general knowledge of everything." God's Word gives this broad knowledge, and his spirit gives us power to use this knowledge and to appropriate it to ourselves, for we see it to be the Word of the Lord.

We receive the spirit of love also. The Apostle says that the Spirit of God is the spirit of love, because "God is love." (1 John 4:8) God's Spirit is God's mind, God's disposition, God's influence. Since God is love, his Spirit must partake of all the qualities which go to make up love.

In proportion to the measure of the holy Spirit which we have, we shall have love—first, toward God; secondly, to the children of God; thirdly, to our neighbors and friends, and lastly it will extend even to our enemies. It would lead us to be considerate of birds and beasts also. The spirit of love has a generally benevolent influence. Whatever affects the thoughts is sure to affect the words. Whoever has the spirit of love will manifest its influences and will become more loving and more lovable as that spirit increases.

DISREGARD FOR THE RIGHTS OF OTHERS A FORM OF SELFISHNESS

Finally, the Apostle brings in the spirit of a sound mind. Man was created with a well-balanced mind. Adam and Eve did not need an outward record of God's law. They had the sense of right and wrong so well defined in their minds that they knew right from wrong intuitively. But when they fell, they lost this balance of mind.

As we come down the centuries from their day to ours, we find that this keen sense of right and wrong has become dull. Thus in cannibal lands the inhabitants believe it right to eat each other. They think that if they feed on enemies who are strong, they will be made strong. This utter disregard for the rights of others is the spirit of selfishness. We see this spirit manifested in civilized lands also, where they do not eat up the enemy literally, but eat up his fortune, his reputation.

Our Lord said that while the Pharisees were very particular to give the full tenth of the mint, anise and cummin, yet they had omitted the weightier matters of the law—judgment, mercy and faith. He showed that the law which says, "Love thy neighbor as thyself," is more important than the giving of tithes. He also said that the Pharisees were full of extortion and excess, and that they strained at a gnat and swallowed a camel, that they devoured widows' houses.—Matt. 23:23-25, 14.

By this our Lord meant that when a widow was left alone, with no one to look after her interests, some of these professors of religion would get possession of her property if they could. So in our day there are people who scheme to discover how they can injure their neighbor. They do not eat the persons of their neighbors, but they eat their substance, their property. These people are cannibals in spirit.

CHARACTERISTICS OF A SOUND MIND

In proportion as we get the spirit of love, we get the spirit of a sound mind. This spirit leads us to consider what is right and what is wrong, in all the affairs of life. Not only have we the spirit of the law, but in addition we have the spirit of the Lord to instruct us. The law says, "Thou shalt have no other gods before me." The spirit of the law says that we shall not permit wealth or anything else to take away our minds from the Lord. We today find people worshipping bonds, stocks, giving the best of their time to the worship of Mammon. They do not know what they are doing.

These people are very well illustrated in Bunyan's picture. You remember that when the pilgrims were in the house of the Interpreter, he took them into a room where there was a man with a muck-rake in his hand, drawing to himself straws, small sticks and the dust of the floor. Above his head was one with a celestial crown in his hand. This crown he proffered to the man in exchange for the muck-rake. But the man neither looked up, nor regarded what was said.

Today we see some who use muck-rakes, gathering all the trinkets of life, not knowing what to do with them after they have been accumulated. When such people die, perhaps these things will be injurious to those to whom they are left. The pilgrims had sound minds, but the man who was raking for sticks and straws and dust has an unsound mind. More or less we see all around us the spirit of an unsound mind, overlooking the things that are really valuable and grasping at trifles.

As we develop the spirit of a sound mind we get to see what things are valuable, and we look at other things as being insignificant. More and more we desire the heavenly things. But the world thinks, "Look at this dust! Is not this fine straw?" or what not. They say, "Get some of these sticks and worm-eaten fruits that we have here." But what they strive for is all illusion.

They say of us that we are of unsound mind because we care for the better things, the heavenly things. So they said of Jesus, "He hath a devil and is mad." (John 10:20) As the Apostle said, "Whether we be beside ourselves, it is to God." (2 Cor. 5:13) Others think it strange that we run not to the same excess of riot. (1 Peter 4:4) And it is true today that whoever will live godly will be misunderstood, slandered. (2 Tim. 3:12) But it is for us to show our courage, our faith and our loyalty to the Lord and to manifest his spirit "of power and of love and of a sound mind." (2 Tim. 1:7) The manifestation of his Spirit will help those who are his to become "more than conquerors." (Ro-

mans 8:37) Thus, even if we are not helping the world, we build one another up in our most holy faith.—Jude 20, 21.

The spirit of a sound mind is a most wonderful manifestation of the holy Spirit in the Lord's people. It gives them much advantage every way over the remainder of mankind. It sees in the present life opportunities for the attainment of character. It broadens and deepens the mind along all good lines. It makes one less touchy in respect to his own rights, privileges and preferences, and more considerate of the rights and feelings of others.

The spirit of a sound mind makes one's judgment clearer, truer, more trustworthy than before, for it impels him to accept the instructions of the Word of God in respect to what he should and should not do, and to reject his own faulty judgment. The meek will he guide in judgment. Whatever may be the imperfection of mind and body resulting from the fall, those who receive the spirit of a sound mind are thereby made purer, kinder, gentler, less selfish and more thoughtful in regard to others. Those who are thus rightly exercised will develop the spirit of love increasingly until that which is perfect shall have come and that which is in part shall have been done away.—1 Cor. 13:10.

"CAST NOT AWAY YOUR CONFIDENCE"

[With the exception of the paragraphs printed below, this article was a reprint of that published in issue of June 1, 1894, which please see.]

"Cast not away therefore your confidence, which hath great recompense of reward."—Hebrews 10:35.

CONFIDENCE THE BASIS OF CHRISTIAN EFFORT

With some of the Lord's people, however, there is a tendency to become discouraged, to think that they may have been unfaithful and thus to lose their peace of mind. In some instances, this feeling of discouragement leads to such fear and distress that the second death is apprehended. The Apostle seems to have in mind this condition. We are surrounded with imperfection of both judgment and conduct; and those who have a proper estimate of themselves must know that they come far short of the divine standard and of their own vow of consecration. This knowledge should tend to make all very humble, and very generous in considering others, but not to discourage us.

St. Paul exhorts all such, saying, "Cast not away your confidence." Let such remember that the fact that they have received this divine favor is an indication that their offering has had divine acceptance. Faith, or confidence, in God and in the "great and precious promises" is the very basis of all Christian endeavor. Without this faith one cannot fight a good fight. In proportion as the promises are before our minds, in that proportion we have strength and courage to run the narrow way.

If a follower of the Lord has been thus discouraged or has felt that his expectations have not been realized, he should not be weary in well doing. He should go to the Lord in prayer and renew his vow of consecration. He should rise from the ashes of discouragement and lift the cross with renewed zeal. He should endeavor to walk on a higher plane than ever. If he lose confidence, lose faith, he will easily be overcome by the adversary.

The very ones whom God will approve are those who walk by faith. The rewards are for those who hold the faith even unto death. We must beware of everything that tends to weaken or destroy our faith. The Lord deals graciously and generously with us. He will do for us whatever is right. Knowing this we can have confidence in God, even though the decision of divine justice should bar us out of divine favor. Those whose hearts are right are submissive to the divine will. The Lord wants us to have a faith that will continue in sorrow and in sunshine; that will trust where it cannot see, that will continue under all the leadings of divine providence.

"IT IS I, BE NOT AFRAID"

Mark 6:45-56.—October 6.

Text:—*"Straightway Jesus spake unto them, saying, Be of good cheer, it is I; be not afraid."*—Matt. 14:27.

Today's study shows us how interested people become in anything that will relieve them of sickness and ailments, which cause our race to be, as St. Paul described it, "a groaning creation." The crowds continued to gather wherever Jesus went, partly for hearing, partly from curiosity, and partly because the message that he gave was one of consolation, comfort, hope. He was not forever blaming them for not keeping the law, but, on the contrary, he was continually expressing sympathy for them in their weakness, and helping them out of them and encouraging them to "go and sin no more."

After the feeding of the five thousand, Jesus urged his disciples to leave him and return to the other side of the lake. He dismissed the multitude and went into the solitude of the hills for prayer. It is noteworthy that nearly all of the Great Teacher's prayers that are recorded are simple and brief. Whenever he wished to make long prayers he went to the Father alone, by himself. Undoubtedly this would be a good example for all of his followers to observe. Long prayers are frequently a weariness to the flesh, and so far as we can discern are likely to contain many vain repetitions, or to be attempts to instruct the Lord and counsel him concerning matters which he understands much better than do any of his children.

WALKING ON THE SEA

The disciples in their fishing boats experienced contrary winds and found the rowing toilsome. In the night they saw what they supposed to be an apparition, a spirit manifestation in human form, walking on the water, and apparently intending to pass by their boat. They cried out, for all saw it and felt troubled. Then they heard a voice saying, "It is I, be not afraid." Jesus got into the boat with them, and the wind ceased, to their amazement, for they had already forgotten the lesson of the previous afternoon—the feeding of the five thousand with the five loaves and two fishes.

In addition to seeing in this a further manifestation of divine power operating through the Redeemer, we may see a further suggestion of a spiritual lesson. No doubt, after the Master's ascension, the disciples felt themselves very much alone in the midst of a contrary people, and found progress difficult and all of their experiences stormy. No doubt it helped them to look back to this occasion and to remember the Master's ability to come to them on the troubled seas, and how his coming brought peace and quiet.

Thus their hearts may have been led to look for him who instructed them, "I will never leave or forsake thee;" and again, "Lo, I am with you alway, even to the end of the age." And this precious lesson still holds good for all who are truly the Lord's people—all who have made a covenant by sacrifice with the Lord, all who have presented their bodies living sacrifices through the merit of Jesus. He is with them continually, to sanctify to them their deepest distress.

"LORD, SAVE, OR I PERISH!"

St. Matthew gives an additional feature of this lesson not recorded by St. Mark. He tells us that when St. Peter learned that it was Jesus who walked upon the sea, he requested the Lord to sanction his walking on the water to him. The Lord consented, and St. Peter had the wonderful courage to make the effort. Had his faith continued, doubtless he would have been sustained, but the Lord's rule with his people seems to be, "According to thy faith be it unto thee." We are not to encourage credulity in ourselves or others, but we are to remember that faith which has a true foundation is very precious in the Lord's sight.

In St. Peter's case it was entirely proper that he should attempt to go to the Lord, because the effort had been sanctioned. It would have been credulity for him to have supposed himself able to walk on the water, without the Lord's sanction and invitation. But when he saw the boistrous waves his faith failed, he began to sink; and then it was that he cried, "Save, or I perish!" How true it is of all God's people that like St. Peter they would like to do some wonderful thing to show their faith in the Lord! And how like St. Peter's are their experiences, often! They would utterly fail did not the Lord interpose for their rescue. However,

as the Lord found no fault with St. Peter for his effort, we are bound to admire the degree of faith and courage which he manifested.

ST. PETER THE TEACHABLE

Much has been said respecting St. Peter's rashness and the difficulties he repeatedly got into. The criticism is surely to some extent justified, but we are to remember that the Master loved him greatly, partly on account of his zeal, partly on account of the energy which on several occasions got him into difficulty. One thing should always be remembered in his favor, that although he was the oldest of the apostles he was evidently one of the most meek and most teachable of them all. Of his mistakes he made a mirror, and thus, learning to know himself more particularly, he was safeguarded through the many dangers natural to his temperament; and he stands forth in the Scriptures as one of the very noblest of the apostles. The wisdom of St. Peter's course is illustrated in a little verse published in the *New York Sun*.

THE THREE FAULT FINDERS

The poem tells that the three fault-finders were provided each with a crystal, to do with as he pleased; and this was the result:

"The fool contrived of his a lens,
Wherein, to gloating eyes,
The smallest blot that could be found
Was magnified in size.
The just man made of his a pane,
All clear without a flaw;
Nor summer sun nor winter rain
Affected what he saw.
The wise man pondered long and well
How best to search, to aid,
Then, taking up the crystal given,
Of his a mirror made."

There must have been a great strain continually upon the Great Teacher and Healer, for he was continually expending his vitality in both directions at once. In healing the sick, virtue, or vitality, went out from him and he healed them all, we read. And all his public teaching cost considerable vitality, especially when he addressed large multitudes. Thus was fulfilled in part the saying of the Prophet respecting him, "Himself took our sickness and bore our infirmities."

Nevertheless, we find him ever ready, ever alert about the Father's business, and looking after the welfare of, and instructing all who gave evidence of being, or of ever becoming, children of God.

When the ship reached shore in the morning, the people recognized him and ran round-about that whole region, and began to carry about on beds those that were sick, to where they heard Jesus was. And wheresoever he entered, into villages, or into cities, or into the country, they laid the sick in the public places, and besought him that these might touch if it were but the corner of his garment; "and as many as touched him were made whole."

The healings which our Lord gave forth during his ministry were physical. As we have already seen, none but himself had yet received of the holy spirit in its begetting power. But did we not hear his word saying, "Lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age"? And have not God's consecrated people throughout the past eighteen centuries realized a blessing also—a spiritual blessing—as Jesus passed their way, as they came to a knowledge of him, as by faith they reached out and touched the hem of his garment, realizing him to be the Son of the Highest, the Redeemer of the world, the Head of the church which is his body, and shortly to be the King of Glory, reigning for the blessing of all the families of the earth?

GOD'S WORD NOT MAN'S

MARK 7:1-13.—OCTOBER 13.

"For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink, but righteousness and peace and joy in the holy Spirit."—Rom. 14:17.

The study today shows that the Pharisees of eighteen centuries ago, while professing to keep carefully the divine law, and while even boasting of faithfulness in this respect, had gradually gotten away from God's Word and become followers of human tradition. It is so with the Jews today. Although they read the Holy Scriptures of the Old Testament it is regarded as a sealed Book which they cannot understand; instead of endeavoring to comprehend it they study and shape the course of their lives by the Talmud. The latter admittedly contains both wise and unwise statements, sound and foolish advice; but according to it the orthodox Jews shape all their religious sentiments.

And surely the same is true of Christians today. The Bible is the recognized authority and standard, but each denomination of Christians has its own theory, its own proof-texts, its own catechism. When the Bible is read the gloss or interpretation of the accepted creed is before the mind and veils it. Thus it is that with Bibles in our hands and with reverence in our hearts Christians are divided into six hundred different sects, with very little prospect of coming together, because each one insists upon using his own creedal spectacles in the study of the Bible.

If truly wise would not all Christians cast aside and destroy these creed spectacles which have so long separated us, given false coloring to various passages of God's Word and confused our minds in general? Would it not be following heavenly counsel and heavenly wisdom to take a different course and to begin a study of the Word of God afresh in the light which shines from one page upon another? We surely will all agree to this theoretically; shall we not put our agreement and resolution into practice?

EATING WITH UNWASHED HANDS

The Pharisees would have liked nothing better than to have so very able a person as Jesus to be one of their number—to conform to their usages and thus to mark them with his approval. They could not fail to note the lofty character of his teachings along the lines of justice, mercy and love. They could have forgiven him for some of the truths which he uttered and made them wince, if only he had enforced their formalism. As it was, he really suited nobody. To the impure he was too pure; to those of loud, hypocritical profession he was too sincere; to the worldly-wise he was too frank, too truthful.

In this lesson the Pharisees inquired why the followers of Jesus were not instructed along the lines of the Talmud—to be very careful to always wash their hands before eating, as a religious duty. We may be sure that Jesus set his followers no example of filthiness or impurity. Indeed, we know that in proportion as truth enters the heart it has a cleansing and purifying effect upon the entire life, upon the whole person—mental, moral and physical. What the Pharisees meant was a ceremonial washing whether the hands were clean or unclean—to make a formal washing a part of their religion. This was what Jesus objected to. He could not so teach because it would have been ceremonial hypocrisy. As he said on another occasion, These customs of the Pharisees, of wonderful washings of their persons and of the vessels in a perfunctory and ceremonial way, consumed much of their time and were burdensome upon the poor, who had no servants to do these things for them, and not doing them was considered unclean, unholy, out of accord with the divine arrangements, not true Jews.

Answering the Pharisees on these points, Jesus said to them, You are the holy people mentioned by Isaiah the Prophet saying, "This people seeketh me with their lips, but their heart is far from me. But in vain do ye worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men," for ye leave the commandments of God and hold fast the traditions of men.

Jesus gave them an example of how they neglected the divine commandments while giving so much attention to ceremonial washings, which were commanded, not of God, but of the Talmud. The illustration was that the Mosaic law commanded that father and mother should be honored and that he that spoke evil of either of them should be put to death. But this command had been changed by the Talmud and any man might be free from his parents by consecrating himself and substance to God and religious uses. Having done so, according to the Talmud, he was freed from all obligations to his parents. Thus they had made God's direct commandment on this subject null and void, which they had no right to do.

This was the conflict between the teachings of Jesus and the teachings of the Pharisees. Both claimed holiness and strict observance of the divine law, but Jesus held to the Word of God and rejected the Talmud, the traditions of the

Elders, and the Pharisees neglected the Word of God and held to the traditions. What are we as Christians doing today? "Let us hold fast the faithful Word," "The Word of God, which is able to make us wise." Let us search the Scriptures daily and critically, and let us abandon everything which conflicts therewith.

WHAT IS GOD'S KINGDOM?

Our text is frequently misunderstood to mean that God's kingdom consists in righteousness and peace and joy in the holy Spirit. The context shows that this is entirely a wrong thought. Let us follow the context and see.

Let us bear in mind what we have already seen respecting the kingdom mentioned in the Bible—that it is the glorious reign of Messiah for a thousand years, for the uplift of the human family, and that during that reign the church will be associated with Jesus in his kingdom glory, power and honor. The call of this Gospel age is to select this bride class and to develop them and make them "meet for the inheritance of the saints in light."

We have seen that in the present time these called out ones—called to be the "bride, the Lamb's wife"—are the kingdom in embryo or in an undeveloped state. These probationary members of the kingdom, the Scriptures tell us, are not under the Law of Moses, expressed in the Ten Commandments; they are not hoping for eternal life through them, but they are under Grace—under a gracious arrangement which God has made for them through the merit of Christ's death. St. Paul points out that while these are free from the various commands of the Jewish law they are not without law, but under the great divine law, as members of the body of Christ. He says that thus we, as new creatures, do fulfil the real meaning of the divine law when we "walk, not after the flesh, but after the spirit," even though we be not able to walk fully up to the spirit of the law because of weaknesses of our flesh. It is the new creature, the desire, that is being judged and not the flesh.

Accordingly the Gentiles who came into membership in the body of Christ were not required to conform themselves to the demands of the Jewish law. For instance, a Jew, according to the law, might not eat fish that had no scales, mackerel, etc., neither might he eat rabbit meat, nor pork, etc., and in a variety of other ways he was restrained and limited in his eating and drinking. But none of these restraints apply to Christians who had come from amongst the Gentiles and who never had been under the Law Covenant.

In our text St. Paul urges that these liberties respecting what they might eat and drink were not to be esteemed as the real blessings of this embryo kingdom class in the present life. Far from it; the real blessings of this class consisted in their enjoyment of righteousness and peace and joy in the holy Spirit. Transformed by the renewing of their minds, they had come to appreciate and love righteousness and truth; good things rather than evil things; pure things rather than impure things; spiritual things rather than earthly things; their citizenship now was in heaven instead of being an earthly one. They had come to appreciate "the peace of God which passeth all understanding," and its rule in their hearts was one of the grand blessings which they enjoyed as members of the embryo kingdom class.

"There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked." "The wicked are like a troubled sea which cannot rest." Our heavenly peace and confidence in God are the result of our union with Christ as members of his kingdom class. This we prize and not specially the privilege of eating pork or some other thing forbidden to the Jews. Joy in the holy Spirit—fellowship with the Father and with the Son and with all who possess the spirit of righteousness—is the blessed privilege of every member of the embryo kingdom class, every member of "the church which is the body of Christ."

Thus the Apostle would have his hearers place a proper valuation upon the various favors which they had received, so that if the interests of the Lord's cause or the interests of the brethren in Christ should ever require them to forego their liberties in respect to food and drink, they would count such self-denials for Christ's sake and for the brethren's sake as nothing—as sacrifices they could make with joy, because they would not interfere with or disturb in the least the real value of the blessings and privileges which are ours in Christ.

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RESPONSIBILITIES OF CHRISTIAN CITIZENSHIP

"The night is far spent, the day is at hand; let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armor of light. Let us walk honestly, as in the day; not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying."—Romans 13:12, 13.

The Scriptures call attention to the fact that there is a night of weeping in contrast with a day of joy. (Psa. 30:5) The "night" is that period of darkness which set in after Adam fell. By one man's disobedience sin entered into the world, and death as the result of sin. (Romans 5:12, 19) Evil has brought sorrow and the darkness of ignorance and superstition among mankind until human affairs have become demoralized. As the Prophet Isaiah says, "Darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people.—Isa. 60:2.

There is however a morning promised. That morning is to be ushered in by the Sun of Righteousness, rising with healing in his beams. (Mal. 4:2) That Sun of Righteousness is Christ and the church with him. "Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father" (Matt. 13:43)—Christ as the head of the church, which is his body.

Another Scripture speaks of the present as daytime: "I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day; the night cometh when no man can work." (John 9:4) While for many centuries there has been a period of darkness, nevertheless since the first advent of our Lord the glorious light of truth has had more effect upon the world than at any previous time; for with the coming of our Lord Jesus a blessing came upon the world. At that time so much light came in, that the Gospel age may be called day in contrast with previous experiences. This day, in turn, gave place to a long period known as the dark ages. Then, since the Reformation, a measure of light came in again, through certain influences which have brought blessings to the Lord's people. Now it is time for the Sun of Righteousness to rise with healing in his beams.

We believe that the day is actually at hand; that we are living in the early dawn of a new dispensation, and that as soon as the harvest of the Gospel age shall have been garnered, "the kingdoms of this world" shall, during a great time of trouble, "become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ.'"—Rev. 11:15.

The Scriptures inform us that the period of time during which the present dominion of Satan shall become the kingdom of God's dear Son, will be a specially evil day. It will be a season in which all the children of light shall be crucially tested; a day that will try every man's faith and work; a day of fiery trial through which only "the gold, the silver and the precious stones" will pass unharmed and in which all the "wood, hay and stubble" of error, sin and human tradition will be entirely consumed.—1 Cor. 3:12, 13; 1 Pet. 4:12.

"AND ALSO THE NIGHT"

While we observe the glorious dawn of the new dispensation, we notice clouds also. The Bible forewarns us that before the kingdom of heaven shall have been set up fully there will be a very dark hour for the world—a period in which sin will have great liberty in its operation, and during which the saints of God will suffer persecution. At the same time we can see the reflection from the "Sun," although it has not yet arisen; we are now in the early dawn. But the coming darkness will make matters appear as though the morning will not come, as though the night had again set in, as though the divine recognition of all things had ceased.

There is, however, a silver lining to the clouds. Soon the Sun of Righteousness will arise with healing in his beams. The church in glory with her lord will put down sin, will dispel the superstition and evil which now becloud the minds of men and will give clear light to the people respecting God and His Word. "I will turn a pure language [message] to the people, that they may all call upon the name of the Lord, to serve him with one consent." (Zeph. 3:9) The message was originally given in its purity, but this freedom from adulteration it did not retain. It has been more or less obscured by ignorance and superstition. When through

Messiah's kingdom the Lord shall make his message pure and plain to mankind, then every knee shall bow and every tongue confess. Those who refuse, however, to develop heart-loyalty to the kingdom shall die the second death.—Isa. 45:23; Acts 3:23.

While the day has not yet come, there are those who Scripturally are called children of the light (1 Thess. 5:5), and who do not belong to the realm of sin. We who are of this class have laid down our lives in consecration for the purpose of becoming servants of righteousness. We are in harmony with God and are enemies of sin. We have been begotten of the holy Spirit to the new nature and are promised joint-heirship with our Lord in the future. Let us, who are of the day, cast off superstition and ignorance—the works of darkness—and put on the armor of light.—Rom. 13:12.

ARISE AND SHINE IN LIGHT ETERNAL

What, then, is the Christian's duty throughout this period of darkness? Shall we live in sin while our hearts are in harmony with righteousness? The Apostle says we must not live in sin. (Rom. 6:15) Let us put off everything which we think will be displeasing to the Lord, everything that is contrary to the light of the new day—the light which we have seen, but which the world has not seen. Let us put on the full "armor of light," the "whole armor of God, that we may be able to withstand in the evil day." And putting it on let us remember that it is not a useless weight, but a necessary protection in battle.—Rom. 13:12; Eph. 6:13.

No man ever puts on armor unless he expects to fight. If he is a soldier of the Cross, the "Sword of the Spirit" is the great weapon with which he will prove his loyalty and strength. The brethren should build each other up in the most holy faith, fighting the good fight and showing their loyalty to the Lord and to the truth. (Jude 20; 1 Tim. 6:12) Those who succumb to the influences of darkness show themselves unworthy of the new order of things, and they may not expect to be sharers with Christ in his kingdom, but to be amongst those rejected of the Lord as unworthy.

Let us remember that we are well along in the hour of temptation which was promised to come upon all the world to try them that dwell upon the earth. (Rev. 3:10) Higher Criticism, Evolution, Christian Science, Hypnotism, New Thought, Mind Cures and other works of darkness are casting a deep shadow over all who are not fully consecrated to the Lord and who therefore are not kept by his power, through his Word and his providences.

"WALK HONESTLY AS IN THE DAY"

While we are not yet fully in the day, yet we belong to the new dispensation, and therefore should live as nearly as possible in accordance with the perfect standard of the future. So to live will imply that we shall be misunderstood by the world; that we shall be thought foolish; and that we shall be considered enemies, not only by those in gross darkness, but particularly by those who, professing to be the Lord's people, really prefer darkness to light, error to truth.

We are inclined to lay special stress upon the word honestly, for we believe that the Apostle used it advisedly and in a special sense. As we look about us we find that dishonesty is very prevalent, not only in the world, where we expect a certain amount of duplicity, misrepresentation, deception and hypocrisy, but even among professing Christians.

Every true child of God should see to it that he is honest, not only in money matters, but in his treatment of his neighbors and his brethren in the church, and above all, in his confessions respecting his faith. The test is being made along this line, and those who love the favor of men rather than the favor of God will be given opportunity to prove that they are unfit for the kingdom, whatever else they may be fit for. The Apostle tells us (2 Thess. 2:11) when speaking of this evil day, that God will send strong delusions that a certain class may believe a lie, because they were not honest, but acted deceptively, hypocritically.

HONESTY THE BASIS OF CHARACTER

Probably the most valuable trait of character is honesty. Where there is little honesty, there is little character; where there is great honesty, there is great character. We mean not merely honesty as to dollars and cents, pounds and shillings, but as to the very thoughts and intents of our hearts, as well as to our words.

We should always endeavor to do to others as we would that they should do to us, and not to retaliate. At the first advent the principal charge which our Lord made against the religious teachers of his day was that they made great professions of holiness, when, as a matter of fact, they were not holy. He said that they devoured widows' houses—not that they literally ate the houses, but that they tried to get possession of the property because of the more or less defenseless position of widows. At that time widows and orphans fell an easy prey to the greed of those whose professions of godliness should have protected the weak and helpless.

Probably our Lord would denounce a great deal of the wisdom of today as he did of that day. But we have not the ability to read the heart and therefore cannot speak as positively as he did. In respect to the great ministers of today, however, we readily see that some of them hold their positions under false pretenses. They profess to receive their salaries as ministers of Christ, when they do not believe in the Bible at all. Some of them have written to us that they are in great trouble; that, realizing their position, they would like to get out of it, but they cannot easily get another position as desirable as their present one; and so they are dishonest enough to keep their charges.

The Apostle says, "Let us walk honestly." Let us take our proper stand for the truth. While we should always speak the truth in love, whether to our enemies or to our friends, while we should always have consideration for the opinion of others, yet we should take our stand firmly. We doubt that the Lord would care to take into the kingdom any who are not honest. We fear therefore, that those who have high positions are "deceiving and being deceived." (2 Tim. 3:13) There is such a thing as deceiving one's self by repeating a sentiment until one believes it.

The lesson to us is that, however others may walk, we must see to it that we "walk honestly as in the day" (Rom. 13:13), as though we were living in the broad daylight, so that if the world understood all about any transaction of ours they would realize that we are honest—even as the Lord understands all about it. Any other course is dangerous and is not "walking as in the day."—John 11:9.

QUALITIES INJURIOUS TO THE BODY OF CHRIST

The translators of the Bible seemed to forget that the Epistles were written "to the saints" (see dedication of the various Epistles), and not to the world; hence when mentioning certain sins they used English words which are applicable to the crimes of the most depraved class of people, instead of such language as would properly represent the misdemeanors that might be expected among saints. In urging the Lord's people to avoid chambering and wantonness, etc., we are not to understand the Apostle to mean the wickedness practised by the most depraved and benighted of the children of the world. Rather, we understand him to address the words to saints, urging them to continence in their social relations, that the thoughts of the kingdom should lift their minds to a large extent from the earthly affections.

By the general rules of language St. Paul would not begin his argument with the grosser sins and end with the less, but reversely he would conclude with the stronger, as evidently he does in enumerating the list of sins given in verse 13 of our text. Here he concludes with the exhortation that the saints, in walking as in the day, should avoid strife and envy. The other difficulties would be comparatively their own affair and might do no injury to others. But strife and envy are two qualities that indicate a wrong condition of heart on the part of the transgressor that would eventually bar him from the kingdom.

Be it noted carefully that the various dispositions mentioned in verse 13—rioting, drunkenness, chambering, wantonness, strife and envy—result from being intoxicated with the spirit of the world. Carelessness of life in any of the earthly affairs, and lack of self-restraint in the connubial relationship are very liable to go hand in hand with a wrong spirit in the church—a spirit of strife, contention, wilfulness, not submitting to the divine Word and providence, but on the contrary, arousing jealousy and ambition on behalf of self or others, for prominence in the body.

SOBRIETY COMMENDABLE

We yield to none in our opposition to intoxicating beverages and in abhorrance of the terrible results which they entail. No saint should ever be intoxicated. The Word of God says that no drunkard shall inherit the kingdom of God. (1 Cor. 6:10) The Scriptures do not say that a moderate use of liquor brings woe, sorrow, redness of eyes, etc., and we are not to add to their words. But we do well remember that "They that tarry long at the wine" probably reached that condition through habit, and that most of such began the use of liquor with the intention of becoming moderate drinkers only.—Prov. 23:30.

Beware of the slavery of habit! Even the force of the "exceeding great and precious promises" is not sufficient to hold in check our fallen appetites when they are constantly being fed and the chains of habit are being forged. Surely the new nature cannot thrive under conditions which deprave even the old nature! Let every new creature resist faithfully the seductive influences of evil, if he would make his calling and election sure to the kingdom.

There is a marked contrast between the spirit and sentiment of the world and that of a true Christian. With the world there is a general tendency to indulge at times in a little revelry, and with many of them there is a decided inclination toward drunkenness. Even among the abstemious there is a feeling that an occasional drink is not only permissible, but quite necessary.

The Christian, however, has set before him the high standard of a sound mind, with meekness, gentleness, patience, brotherly-kindness, love. The more a Christian possesses the spirit of righteousness, the holy Spirit, the more he realizes that he has passed from darkness into light. The divine standard is to be his viewpoint always. Instead of looking forward to revelry, he is rather to turn away with regret that any such conditions prevail among mankind. The world considers the use of liquor to be proper if not too frequently indulged in. The Christian, on the contrary, considers drunkenness and revelry to be improper and to be resisted so far as he and his influence are concerned.

The Christian is to display increasingly the spirit of true holiness. The Apostle says, "Let your moderation be known of all men." (Phil. 4:5) The very promises made to us in the Scriptures tend to make us sober. Our God is most gracious!

"What more can he say than to you he hath said,
You who unto Jesus for refuge have fled?"

Hence anything that might lead our steps away from the spirit of holiness is to be regarded as something pernicious, for it might cost us divine favor, our eternal life and a share in the kingdom.

The world, on the contrary, have no such incentive to influence them. It is their custom to indulge in just as much revelry as would not be too seriously disapproved by society. Banquets are given for the very purpose of having a so-called "good time." When worldly people get together there is a general tendency to revelry and a certain amount of looseness. All this has a demoralizing effect upon society.

THE TRUTH A RESTRAINING INFLUENCE

The Christian has a restraining influence which is unknown to the world. Not only does he wish to have the approval of his neighbors, but more than all he desires the still higher standard of divine approval; for he is on trial before the Lord himself as to his manner of life. Hence, with him there is a principle to help him to shun rioting, drunkenness, reveling or similar conditions. The Apostle Paul admonishes the Christian to make straight paths for his feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way. (Heb. 12:13) For instance, if a man have an appetite for liquor he should avoid everything that would tend to arouse that appetite. Thus he would make "straight paths for his feet," that he might walk pleasing to the Lord.

The Lord does not deal with his people along the lines of commands. In his Word he sets the standard of a sound mind, not only in respect to revelry and the use of liquor, but to all manner of conduct. Those who love him will strive to attain that standard. Whether therefore we eat or drink or whatsoever we do, we should do all to the glory of God. (1 Cor. 10:31) But we find that Christians called out from the world need to learn and to develop true character. At first they think nothing of what subsequently they would consider grievous error. As the Christian grows in knowledge and in love toward his fellow-men, he learns to measure things more carefully by the divine standard. So we find that those who have been Christians for a long time show good judgment in respect to everything in life. They use the spirit of a sound mind, which is the most desirable thing in the world.—2 Tim. 1:7.

The Christian has before him high standards and the hope of the high reward of association with Christ in the kingdom. We are glad to note that with the centuries there has developed a tendency toward morality and all the good things of life. And although there is much corruption below the surface of society, yet there is something which keeps that surface comparatively smooth, whatever may be below it.

When we compare civilization with heathendom, we do not find much more evidence of self-control in the former than in the latter. The heathen live as have their ancestors for centuries, with very little rioting and drunkenness of any kind. In a journey around the world we saw only two intoxicated men, except in what we call civilized, or Christian lands. The vast majority of the heathen are temperate. Mohammedanism has done a great deal for mankind in respect to temperance. So has Buddhism. In one city we met a Christian brother who told us that he was a temperance missionary. When questioned as to his mission, he replied, "Oh, amongst those who accept Christianity there is much more need for temperance work than amongst others! I am spending my life in this way."

PLAIN LIVING AND HIGH THINKING

In all parts of the world it is customary to use liquor in the so-called "upper-strata" of society. At hotels abroad nearly every person at the table is supplied with liquor. On the steamers the use of liquor is so customary that to ask for water is enough to create a sensation among the waiters. We are greatly blessed in America in that alcoholic beverages are held in disapprobation, although a great deal is used here in social circles. Liquor is justly regarded with opprobrium, for it is doing a great deal of harm and should be frowned down.

Christians are not to walk in reveling, nor in drunkenness, nor in rioting, but are to live on a high intellectual and moral plane. We are not to take pleasure merely in the animal appetites—in food, drink, etc.—but we are to live the higher life from our knowledge of God and his plan and of all things that pertain to our welfare. This course should include also a sanity and sobriety of mind in regard to religious matters.

The great "harlot" pictured in the Revelation (17:4, 5), has in her hand a cup, in which there is the wine of false doctrine; intoxicating the people who drink it. This drunkenness is upon all; but we are gradually emerging from its intoxicating effects. The hobgoblins that we saw when we were under its influence are disappearing, and sanity is returning to us. Now we have more pleasure in the Lord, more of the spirit of a sound mind. The Lord's people should be moderate, not only in respect to the temporal food and drink, but also the spiritual. Whoever finds it wise to be careful in the one, finds it best to be careful in the other. Whatever doctrine is not based upon the Word of God is to be rejected. "To the law and to the testimony; if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them."—Isa. 8:20.

WORLDLY WISDOM NOT LIGHT

From the divine standpoint there are two great principles in operation—right and wrong, light and darkness. All the children of God, so far as they have received the holy Spirit of begetting, are children of light. The world's condition is not that of light, but of darkness (Eph. 5:8; 1 Thess. 5:5) There are different shades of darkness, however. The Scriptures declare that "Darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people"; "The darkness hateth the light"; "If ye were of the world, the world would love its own"; "Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works and glorify your Father which is in heaven."—Isa. 60:2; John 15:19; Matt. 5:16.

Neither the philosophies of men nor their moral sentiments are light. The true light cometh down from above; and only those who are begotten of the Spirit of the Lord have that light. To these, old things have passed away and all things have become new. (2 Cor. 5:17) The elements of darkness that reign in our mortal bodies are to be discouraged and to be expelled therefrom. The clause, "If the light that is in thee become darkness," refers only to the church class and means, If the light of the holy Spirit of our begetting become extinguished, how great will be the darkness!—Matt. 6:23.

When the Apostle says, "Grieve not the holy Spirit of God whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption" (Eph. 4:30), he evidently is warning us against losing the light that has illumined us—the Spirit of our adoption. The caution, "Grieve not the holy Spirit," implies that it will not leave suddenly without being grieved. We can readily see that little things may be the entering wedge in the displacement of the Spirit.

SELFISHNESS LEADS INTO DARKNESS

"Love is the fulfilling of the law." (Rom. 13:10) We who are in Christ Jesus have the righteousness of the Law fulfilled in us, because we are walking not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. (Rom. 8:4) The fulfilment of the law is love supreme for God and love for our neighbor as for ourselves. Everything in the nature of selfishness tends to displace love. Selfishness in its various forms is the work of the devil. Selfish ambitions have a distracting influence

and in time will remove us from the Lord. The Apostle mentions as branches coming out of this root of selfishness, anger, malice, hatred, envy, strife—all of which are works of the flesh and the devil, in contrast to the fruits of the Spirit, which are meekness, patience, gentleness, brotherly-kindness, and love.—Gal. 5:22, 23.

To whatever extent those begotten of the holy Spirit as dear children of God allow that Spirit to be displaced in their hearts by an evil spirit, to that extent darkness comes in. A little anger dispossesses a proportionate amount of love; a little envy, jealousy or contention is very injurious. Love cannot dwell where strife is found. Whoever, therefore, having received the Spirit of the Lord, allows a wrong spirit of the flesh to return and to displace the Spirit of the new creature, will in that proportion go into darkness.

This darkness will not only cause the person to become more quarrelsome in disposition, but will affect him also in respect to his spiritual vision. As the enlightenment of the holy Spirit gives him a better knowledge of the deep things of God, so, in proportion as this Spirit is lost, the knowledge of the deep things will vanish, until there will be gross darkness. The individual will then be in the same condition as the world in respect to spiritual things. No matter what he once knew and saw, he will not henceforth be able to understand these things; for "The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him."—reverence him. (Psa. 25:14) To whatever extent we lose the Spirit of the Lord, the Spirit of love, loyalty and obedience, to that extent we lose its illumination.

The Apostle Paul speaks of the "mystery," which is explained as the peculiar relationship existing between Christ and the church. (Eph. 3:3-6) No one can appreciate this mystery unless he is begotten of the holy Spirit. If one loses the Spirit of his begetting and goes into darkness, how great is that darkness! He loses all knowledge of that mystery.—Matt. 6:23.

Perhaps all have noticed that we may sit in a room dimly lighted and not particularly heed the darkness. But if we go to an adjoining room which is brilliantly lighted, and then re-enter the dimly lighted room, it will seem darker than when we left it. For a time at least we cannot see anything. The eye must become accustomed to darkness gradually. So it is with those who receive the light of truth and afterwards lose it. They seem to go into grosser darkness than before they had the light.

CHRISTIAN STANDARD VERY HIGH

In the heathen world there is gross darkness. With every step of civilization comes a clearer view of the difference between right and wrong, and a general progress toward the right. Sometimes we find people in the world who have not been begotten of the holy Spirit and who, not having the light in them, are still in darkness, but who try to regulate their conduct by certain principles. They say, "This is right and that is wrong. We will do this, but not that." They make rules of righteousness for themselves, although they are not willing to live up to the drastic laws which the Lord has established as his standard. They say, "We will do what the majority of people think is right." These people form a moral code of their own, based upon what others think. They have no standard other than public opinion. Wherever they go they practise what the majority of their neighbors think to be right.

But the Christian takes the extreme view which God sets before him—full consecration unto death. He is considered an extremist, a fanatic, by the world who hate his course and think it foolish. They say, "You Christians raise the standard too high. We are willing to live up to the standard of the majority in our community, but not to yours. You have such peculiar views."

The Lord's people gauge their views, not by what others think, but by what the Word of God teaches. They say, "To my Lord I must be true." To everything else they decline to conform. Thus they are led by the holy Spirit, the Spirit of truth, the Spirit of love, which actuates them. But if this Spirit be extinguished, a mind once under its control will be in a worse condition than that of a worldly mind; for the latter, not having the special direction of the Lord's Spirit, has for its standard the opinion of others. The Lord's people have lost the fear of man, and if they lose also the mind of the Lord, they have no fixed principle to govern their course. Then their natural disposition will assert itself; and the light in them having become darkness, "how great is that darkness!"

St. Paul tells us (Heb. 6:4-6), that "It is impossible . . . . to renew again to repentance" any who are wilful sinners against full light and knowledge. These have committed the "sin unto death"—the second death—from which there will be no recovery.—1 John 5:16.

Let us then, while rejoicing in divine favor, see to it that we act circumspectly. Our walk in life is not to be "after the flesh," which leads more or less directly to death, but "after the Spirit," which leads to everlasting life with our Great Redeemer. "This is the will of God, even your sanctification."—1 Thess. 4:3.

THE TWO WORDS

PROVERBS 18:8, 21.

"One day a harsh word rashly said,
Upon an evil journey sped,
And, like a sharp and cruel dart,
It pierced a fond and loving heart;
It turned a friend into a foe,
And everywhere brought pain and woe.

"A kind word followed it one day,
Flew swiftly on its blessed way;
It healed the wound, it soothed the pain,
And friends of old were friends again;
It made the hate and anger cease,
And everywhere brought joy and peace.

"And yet the harsh word left a trace
The kind word could not quite efface;
And though the heart its love regained,
It bore a scar that long remained.
Friends could forgive, but not forget,
Or lose the sense of keen regret.

"Oh! if we could but learn to know
How swift and sure our words can go,
How would we weigh with utmost care
Each thought before it sought the air,
And only speak the words that move
Like white-winged messengers of love!"

TO THE JEW FIRST

MARK 7:24-30; MATT. 8:5-13.—OCTOBER 20.

"Him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out."—John 6:37.

There is general confusion prevalent amongst God's people respecting the relationship between the Gospel of Christ and the Jewish nation and between the Jewish nation and all other nations. In the past we have been too free to guess, to imagine, to suppose, and have not carefully enough studied the clear statements of the Bible on this subject. The Bible tells that until the coming of Christ—yea, until three and a half years after Jesus died, arose from the dead and ascended on high, the divine dealings were confined to the Hebrew race—to Abraham and his natural posterity. The whole world is involved in the penalty that came upon Father Adam because of his disobedience—the whole world is under divine sentence as being unworthy of everlasting life or of relationship with God—the whole world, therefore, as St. Paul describes, "are by nature children of wrath," and all were strangers, foreigners and aliens from God.

The Jews were no better than the remainder of the race, so far as the Scriptures tell, but God, having from the first determined to provide a Redeemer for mankind, through whose kingdom all the world ultimately should be blest and have the privilege of return to divine favor, made a selection of Abraham's posterity, because Abraham himself was a noble character whose faith and obedience to God were thus rewarded. It was not, therefore, anything of which the Jews might boast that their nation and not another nation came into relationship with God through the Law Covenant. It was of divine grace or favor. According to divine prophecy this

favor was to continue with the Jew for a definite period of time, namely, until three and a half years after the cross.

THE GOSPEL OF CORNELIUS

As soon as the limit of time expired God manifested his favor toward the Gentiles by sending the Gospel message to Cornelius, a reverential and holy and generous Gentile. Since then God's favors are as open to the Gentile as to the Jew—"the middle wall of partition" has been "broken down." The Gentiles and Jews are now both received on the same terms, viz., faith in Jesus and consecration to walk in his steps.

It is from this standpoint that we should read the Apostle's statement that the Gospel of Christ "is preached to every creature under heaven." He did not mean nor would it have been true that the Gospel had been preached to every creature in the sense of being proclaimed to all. For now, eighteen centuries later, it has not yet been proclaimed to all mankind. What the Apostle did mean is that the Gospel is now unrestricted, free to be preached to every creature under heaven, no matter what his nationality—that it is no longer confined to Jews as at first. Now, whoever has "an ear to hear, let him hear" the good message of the kingdom. Now, whoever hears and has a heart to accept God's gracious message, let him present his body a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable unto God through Christ. (Rom. 12:1) Now, "Him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out."

THE SYRO-PHENICIAN WOMAN'S FAITH

The narrative of today's study fully confirms what we have said about it, namely, that at the time of our Lord's ministry, and for three and a half years after his death, all God's favors still belonged to the Jews only. The Syro-Phenician woman of our study was a Greek—not a Jewess. Her daughter was possessed of an evil spirit, a demon—"obsessed." She heard that Jesus was near the border of Judea, near her home, and she sought him out, imploring that he would cast out the demon.

But Jesus said to the woman, "Let the children first be filled, for it is not proper to take the children's bread and cast it to the dogs." She understood the force of this statement. The Jews claimed to be God's people, and the Gentiles were styled "Gentile dogs," because they had never been in covenant-relationship with God. Yet the poor woman's faith in Jesus and her earnest desire for the relief of her daughter moved her to press her case and she answered, "Yea, Lord, but the little dogs under the table eat of the children's crumbs." She was one of these "little dogs"; might she not have the crumb of comfort and blessing which she craved—the healing of her daughter? Jesus replied, "For this saying go thy way; the devil is gone out of thy daughter." She got the crumb, her faith prevailed.

Today the Israel of God, to whom belong all the blessings and promises and favors of God, are the Spiritual Israelites. These, through full consecration to the Lord and through the imputation of the merit of Jesus' sacrifice, begotten of the holy Spirit, are embryo sons of God, partakers, inheritors of the divine nature and kingdom.

Have we not, however, from time to time heard of some outsiders—Gentiles—who have never come into covenant-relationship with God and who are therefore strangers and foreigners to all the blessings which belong to the "household of faith"—have we not heard of some of these receiving occasional crumbs of comfort and of blessing? We have. But surely these will be exceptional cases. The door to come into Natural Israel was barred, but the door into Spiritual Israel is open, and as our text declares, him that cometh unto Jesus he will in no wise reject. Hence there is no excuse today for any being in the attitude of "dogs," receivers merely of an occasional crumb of God's blessing. If they will, the door of favor still stands open that they may become "sons of God without rebuke."

THE CENTURION'S SERVANT HEALED

A Centurion in the Roman army service corresponded to a captain in our military service today. Palestine, as a province, was subject to the Roman Empire, and little garrisons of Roman soldiers were stationed here and there, usually under a Centurion. They were Gentiles, of course. One of these knew of Jesus and his mighty works, and when his faithful and appreciated servant fell sick he went to Jesus asking for healing. In our Lord's metaphor this was another Gentile dog desiring a crumb from the children's table.

The Centurion's faith, our Lord declared, was superior to anything that he had found amongst the Israelites, God's favored people. He was so confident of Jesus' power that while he urged that, being a Gentile, Jesus would not wish to honor or recognize him by coming under his roof, yet he besought him simply to say the word and he was sure it would be sufficient to heal his servant. He explained that he had this faith because he himself was a man of authority and could command his servants to come and go, and that as Jesus had still higher authority, his messengers, whatever they were, by which he healed sickness and pain, could be commanded and would obey. He got his request.

Jesus took the occasion to say that the Israelites, who were counting so much on their relationship to God as the children of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, would find themselves greatly mistaken in the end. Being the children of Abraham did indeed mean that they would have special privileges and opportunities, but these they were enjoying and were not appreciating them. They should not think that God would take them for his elect people regardless of their character, their faith, their obedience, or their likeness to Abraham. They were indeed the children of the kingdom—the ones to whom it was properly first offered, but God would not thrust it upon them.

God did take out of their nation the "Israelites indeed"; meantime the rest were blinded, and for the past eighteen centuries he has been completing the elect kingdom church, out of all nations, peoples, kindreds and tongues. But he is selecting none except such as have the faith and obedience of Abraham and the spirit of his Son Jesus—none but the holy, the loyal, the true. These will be associated in the kingdom, while the natural Israelites, over-confident, let the privilege go by.

Nevertheless the Scriptures most clearly declare that the natural seed of Abraham, the Jews, are still heirs of a certain promise of God, which in due time will come to them. To their nation will come the great privilege of being the foremost nation amongst men during Messiah's glorious reign, when the church glorified, spiritualized, will be with him in his throne, invisible to men. St. Paul thus explains that the full number, to complete the elect kingdom class, must be first found amongst the Gentiles, and then, these being glorified in the first resurrection, natural Israel will obtain the great earthly blessings which are still theirs and which were promised to their fathers. Natural Israel will receive blessings from spiritual Israel. "They shall obtain mercy through your mercy."—Rom. 11:25-34.

THE NEW CREATURE'S RESPONSIBILITY TO DIVINE LAW

PART II—EXPERIENCE OF THE NEW CREATURE EDUCATIONAL

The new creature is represented by the will, the mind; but there can be no new creature without a body. God does not give the new creature its own body in the present life, but permits it to practise on the old body. And according to the new creature's faithfulness in the old body will be its reward—either as a member of the little flock or of the great company or—for unfaithfulness, its punishment, second death.

The new creature owns the mortal body, possesses that body. The body is not the new creature's body except in a possessive sense. If one were living in a cabin temporarily while his house is being built, and someone else were to ask, "Is that your house?" he would say, "No; I am staying here merely until my house is built." So the new creature occupies the old body. That body is dead because it has been devoted to God in connection with the sin-offering.—Col. 3:3; Gal. 2:20.

The Lord knoweth our frame. He knows that we are all fallen, imperfect—mentally, morally, physically. His message to the new creature is, "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect." (Matt. 5:48) This means perfection of will, of intent, of endeavor. But God knows that we have this treasure of the new will in a mortal body, which is imperfect. Through Christ he has made provision that every imperfection of our flesh may be forgiven on condition that we come to him for that forgiveness in the name of our Advocate, Jesus. This arrangement is to our advantage for it leads us to watch the more carefully in respect to our trespasses and to note the more carefully that they cannot be forgiven except through the merit of our Redeemer.

THREE BLESSINGS RESULTING FROM FAITHFUL OBEDIENCE

The experience of the new creature in coming to the Throne of Grace for help is, therefore, educational. It will strive the more diligently, the more earnestly, the more perseveringly, to live according to the will of God, not only in mind, but

also in body. The result of faithfully following this course of daily scrutinizing our thoughts and words and doings must be the strengthening, the fortifying of the new creature against the wiles of the world, the flesh and the adversary.

Additionally, this course must mean not only a higher and nobler earthly life, even though still imperfect, but a great sympathy for others of the human family and for the church, who similarly strive against the weaknesses of heredity in the flesh, and also a general enlightenment of the heart sympathetically toward the members of the human family—born in sin, "shapen in iniquity." It must mean thus much in preparation for the future kingdom—for helping poor humanity up out of the degradation of sin and death.

CAUSES OF SPIRITUAL DECLINE

Although the new creature cannot consent to sin, cannot sin wilfully, cannot sin with deliberation, and still be a holy mind, it can become slack, careless, inattentive, overcharged with the cares of this life—not sufficiently loyal and alert to fight against the great enemy. In this condition it may become more or less stupefied, while the will of the flesh may gain the ascendency in some particular. The flesh has its cravings, its demands; and it has a plausible way of urging what it thinks to be its rights and privileges. Sometimes the flesh is very persistent along these lines.

If the new creature become overcharged, become weak through a failure to eat the strengthening food which the Father has provided, it may be almost helpless for a time, until at last it becomes non-resistant to sin. To whatever extent the new creature is to blame for this condition, it will receive stripes, not merely as a matter of justice, but also as a matter of correction, for if it were not corrected it might go on to greater carelessness as to its responsibilities.

We all need to be disciplined in order that we may stand firm for the principles of righteousness. To whatever extent the new creature fails to resist the flesh, there will be stripes, punishment of some kind, retribution. But even when those punishments come, there will be the manifestations of the Lord's favor.

The experiences of the Prophet David were not altogether like those of the saints, for he was on a different plane from us. But we may apply the general principles deduced from his experiences. David sinned and the Lord allowed certain chastisements to come upon him. David was contrite and asked forgiveness for those sins. Although he had the light of the Lord's favor, yet the Lord declared that he must be punished for doing those things which he knew were wrong, even though all the while his heart was set on the Lord. The after experiences of the man proved his contrition. He committed sin; he repented; he was forgiven; he was restored to the Lord's favor. Yet in due time he received chastisements for those very sins; and when he received those chastisements, he recognized that they were a just recompense of punishment upon him.

STAGES IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF WILFUL SIN

Inattention or carelessness on the part of the new creature does not necessarily mean the second death, unless that carelessness went to the extent of intelligent choice of sin—wilful sin. The wilful sinner cuts himself off entirely from divine favor and lapses into the condition of condemnation to death, out of which he had been lifted. Of this the Apostle speaks, saying, "We are not of those who draw back unto perdition," destruction—second death. Furthermore, it should be noted that none ever steps suddenly from loyalty to disloyalty to God and to righteousness.

Wilful sin coming upon the new creature destroys him so gradually that he seems not to be conscious of its development at the time. First, the wish, the desire, the pride or the ambition develops; he is not submissive to the divine will. Later on, an attempt is made to acquire the gratification of the pride of life, the lust of the eye and of the flesh and a corresponding neglect of the heavenly things—of the hope set before us in the Scriptures and of the covenant of sacrifice which we have made.

A later development of this wrong spirit by and by finds opportunity, under one pretext or another, to put the person into opposition to the Lord, to the truth and to the brethren. He thus gradually passes from being a soldier under the banner of Christ to becoming a co-laborer with the adversary in opposing the things of God.

As the Apostle says, "Behold, how great a matter a little fire kindleth!" (James 3:5) Behold what a great destruction of all the work of grace may be acomplished speedily by a little pride or fond desire or self-gratification!—not that the little beginnings mean the second death, but that they will surely lead on toward it unless the individual be recovered. St. James emphasized this thought, saying, "When lust [desire] has conceived, it bringeth forth sin; and sin when it is finished [completed] bringeth forth death."—James 1:15.

THREE METHODS OF ADMONITION USED BY THE LORD

Meanwhile, while one of the Lord's sheep would be thus straying, would the Great Shepherd be inattentive and allow him to wander without warning? Surely not! Through some divine providence, such as sickness or the coming to the attention of some message from God's Word, directly or indirectly, or through faithful testimony and witness of the brethren, the Lord will speak to all such straying sheep, pointing out to them the danger of the path they are taking. If they heed well, they shall be recovered fully; and ultimately attain to the highest state as overcomers. But the Lord will not coerce.

In the beginning the Lord appealed to our wills, and he continues to do so. The Lord will not use force in the selection of the present time; for He seeketh only such to serve him as worship him in spirit and in truth. The same will which he accepted and which brought us such great blessing can reject God's favors—can receive the grace of God in vain and gradually draw back out of fellowship with the Lord and with the spirit of the covenant and toward the second death.

If the admonitions of the Lord's providences, including the counsel of the brethren, etc., fail, and if there be a measure of ignorance connected with the perverse course, the Lord may give severe chastisements to awaken thoroughly such a person, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus, through those chastisements. (1 Cor. 5:5) Many such, the Scriptures assure us, will come up out of great tribulation, washing their robes and making them white in the blood of the Lamb. (Rev. 7:14) But while they may attain to a good position on the spirit plane, they have lost the great, pre-eminent prize of joint-heirship with the Lord in the Messianic kingdom, unto which they were called.

ALLOWANCE MADE FOR IMMATURITY OF CHARACTER

It seems to be a correct principle, however, that a person begotten of the holy Spirit, who had not yet developed strength of character sufficient to qualify him to be a child of God on the heavenly plane, would not have judgment passed upon him until he had enjoyed the opportunity of coming to a knowledge of present truth and of demonstrating his loyalty.

This thought seems to be borne out by the Apostle in Hebrews 6:4-6. There, where he says in substance. If those who have tasted of the good Word of God and been made partakers of the holy Spirit, shall fall away, it will be impossible to renew them, he implies that those who have not had this opportunity for development are not responsible to such an extent and would not be liable to the second death. If a babe had done something worthy of stripes, he would be treated according to his infancy. The Apostle Peter says, "As new-born babes, desire the sincere milk of the Word, that ye may grow thereby."—1 Peter 2:2.

These texts seem to suggest a process of development. If one made his consecration today, he would not be counted worthy of the kingdom today; for only through trials and tribulations shall he become worthy. A certain period of probation would be granted to him, an opportunity to make good his covenant of sacrifice. Then if he failed to make good that covenant of sacrifice, he would be responsible in one of the two ways, as we have seen; either he would receive chastisements of the Lord which would bring him to a realization of his privileges, or if wholly unworthy of God, he would go into the second death. Anyone becoming a Christian will have a long enough time in which to make his calling and election sure, if he so run in the race as to obtain.

SELF-IMPOSED DISCIPLINE RECOMMENDED

Sometimes God's people, appreciating their own weaknesses, the blemishes of their flesh, properly feel themselves unworthy of the glorious things which God has in reservation for the elect. It is their duty to do the best in their power, but not to attempt to judge, to decide their own cases. There is One that judgeth them, even God. Whatever the sin, whatever the circumstances, it should be taken promptly to the throne of heavenly grace in the name of Jesus, to obtain the mercy of God provided thus, and to find increasing help for future times of need.

We must not become discouraged and lose faith and hope, even though obliged to come to that throne, repentantly, seventy times seven times. To whatever extent, however, the sin be repeated as the result of earthly weaknesses of heredity, to that extent there is forgiveness, in the divine arrangement. But to whatever extent the sin contained a measure of willfulness, or to whatever extent we failed to use our knowledge and ability to resist it, to that extent the new creature will be held responsible, and will have certain chastisements imposed. Happy are those people who seek to punish themselves

by some discipline, such as fasting. The Apostle says, "If we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged" [chastened of the Lord].—1 Cor. 11:31, 32.

We should all keep in memory, however, the fact that God expects of us a demonstration of loyalty to him and to the principles of truth and righteousness—in an overcoming degree. It will not do simply to stand still from week to week and from year to year and to say, "These are my weaknesses and I take them to Jesus." Overcoming is the gaining of some victory by the new creature over besetting weaknesses as well as over trespasses. Only such as strive will be crowned and acknowledged of the Lord as overcomers. And their overcoming will be, not of themselves, but of God's grace and the assistance of the Great Advocate.—1 John 5:4.

THE NEW CREATURE'S RIGHT TO LIFE

From the time that we become new creatures in Christ, a right to life on the spirit plane is given us, just as a right to live on the human plane was granted to Adam when he was created. But as he lost that right to life by disobedience to God, so we, as new creatures, if we sin wilfully, would forfeit that right to live, and we could not be redeemed again, for "Christ dieth no more." (Rom. 6:9) Those who really accept God's proposition as laid down, heartily consecrate themselves, have passed from death to life, and the Apostle says that these are alive.

That right to life, according to the divine record, is a very different matter from anything we had before. Formerly, we had a right to die. Since we became new creatures we have a right to live, unless we take some adverse step. Therefore, it is a very different thing with the church from what it is with mankind. The world will gain the right to life under the opportunities offered to them during the thousand years of Christ's reign. We have that right to live now. Our "life is hid with Christ in God." (Col. 3:3) Men can kill the body, but no man can take from us the right to live. Our eternal life has already begun in a sense. We are on trial now, and if we pass the trial successfully, we shall forever possess that right to life.

Not so with the world. There is no provision by which the world has a right to life. "The rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished." (Rev. 20:5) Therefore the church gets eternal life at least a thousand years before the world will be given the right to everlasting life; it is ours now and forever if we continue faithful unto death. Mankind will all be awakened from the tomb, but we do not know what proportion of them will get everlasting life. We hope that many will obtain it. But there is a difference between having and hoping. We have a right to life because we are in Christ; because the Father so decreed for us.

DEATH OF HUMAN WILL AT CONSECRATION

At the time of our consecration the old creature dies in the sense that the old will dies. The old will, in the Scriptures termed the "old man" (Col. 3:9), is reckoned dead at the time of our consecration. But this is not real death; and hence there is a continual mortifying until the time of actual death. The Apostle says, "I die daily." (1 Cor. 15:31) His old will was given up. The body of flesh which had belonged to the old creature and which had been reckoned dead since consecration, was not really dead. He was not only reckoned alive as a new creature, but the flesh body was reckoned to be his body until such time as in God's providence, by the power of the first resurrection, he should be clothed upon with his new body. Hence his flesh is the flesh of the new creature, and his body that belonging to the new creature.

The new creature is responsible for the flesh body, and the weaknesses of the old creature are charged up against the new creature. There is an arrangement, however, by which the new creature can have the appropriation of the merit of Christ for the weaknesses of heredity. So St. Paul exhorts the church to come boldly to the throne of grace, there to obtain mercy for the shortcomings of daily life.—Heb. 4:16.

DEATH OF THE HUMAN BODY

The new creature never dies, unless it forfeits its right to life and goes into the second death. What dies is the human body, which was consecrated to death, but which has been loaned to the new creature to practise on, as it were. God gives the new creatures their new bodies in the first resurrection.

Speaking of the first resurrection, St. John says, "It doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that when he shall appear we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is." (1 John 3:2) This statement is satisfactory to the Lord's people, for though they might without impropriety be curious to know full particulars respecting their spirit bodies—shape, size, elements, etc.—they can well imagine that the new conditions will be so different from present conditions as to be beyond the power of the human brain to comprehend, no matter how particular the description given. But the whole question is settled with the assurance that the church shall be like her Lord, and see him—not as he was in the days of his humiliation, the man Christ Jesus, nor as he appeared to his disciples after his resurrection, robed in flesh in various forms, with various garments—but see him "as he is," behold his glory, and be like him, sharing his glory.

To be concluded in our next issue.

"HE DOETH ALL THINGS WELL"

Mark 7:31—8:10.—October 27.

"He hath done all things well: he maketh both the deaf to hear, and the dumb to speak."—V. 37.

In previous studies we have noted the fact that Jesus invariably, in connection with his miracles, impressed the healed ones in particular, and all the witnesses in general, with the fact that the healing power was divine, thus to establish faith in God. Today's lesson gives a special illustration along this line. A person was brought to the Savior to heal who was deaf and who had an impediment in his speech. They besought him that he would lay hands on him.

From this it seems evident that most of the miracles were performed by the laying on of hands, although the record also is that some were healed by touching Jesus or touching his garments. In the latter case it is evident that the healed person exercised faith, otherwise he would not have touched the garment in hope of healing. In another case we read that Jesus could not do many mighty works at a certain place on account of their unbelief. Hence, willingly or unwillingly, the power of healing was associated with the exercise of faith; it was either on the part of the sick, or for him by his friends.

The instance under consideration is peculiar. (1) Because Jesus took the man away from the multitude and healed him privately; and (2) it is peculiar as to the means used. He put his fingers into the man's ears, as though to start some life current through them; then he spat and touched the man's tongue. We cannot suppose that the Master's power was limited to these means, when on other occasions he exercised other means. It seems preferable to understand that these methods were used in order to attract the man's attention and assist him in the exercise of faith.

As the man could not hear, nothing said to him could explain the situation; he could see the spitting, he could feel the touch, he understood what was going on, and incidentally the healing of his person. These matters meant the submission of his mind, or the exercise of a degree of faith. Additionally, after having given those lessons, and while the man still looked at him, Jesus looked up to heaven, and thus the patient had a third lesson on the subject, namely, that the power for his cure was expected from God. Jesus sighed, and said, "Ephphatha," that is, "Be opened," and immediately the man's ears were opened and the difficulty of his speech was gone.

The statement that Jesus sighed is worthy of note; we can only surmise that it indicated His deep sympathy with the man before him and with the groaning creation in general. We remember another occasion on which it was said that Jesus "groaned in spirit." That was when he stood by the tomb of his friend Lazarus, and saw Mary weeping and the Jews weeping with her. "He groaned in spirit and was troubled," and wept also. The general lesson seems to be that he was

TOUCHED WITH A FEELING OF MAN'S INFIRMITIES,

as had been phophesied. The fact is, he was perfect—he did not have an imperfect body with aches and pains and blemishes, such as other men have, but this did not make him cold and unsympathetic, rather the reverse. His perfect mind would make all his sensibilities more active than ours, his sympathy would be stronger, his sense of pain keener. We, as a fallen race, have become so accustomed to many of our surroundings that they are commonplace and we are inclined to consider them natural—forgetting that the natural

order of man would be the perfect order, and that the blemished state is the unnatural.

In yet another way may we suppose our Master was touched with a feeling of our infirmities, namely, by reason of his losing vitality on the occasion of each miracle. Is not this the meaning of the Scripture which declares that "he poured out his soul unto death"? Daily, hourly, his vitality was being exhausted in the healing, blessing, comforting and instructing of those with whom he was in contact. We have a very clear expression on this very subject, in the case of the poor woman who had an issue of blood for years, and who quietly and unostentatiously touched the hem of his garment, saying within herself, "If I may but touch his garment, I shall be healed." She was healed instantly, and Jesus turned himself about and asked, "Who touched me?" for he perceived that virtue, vitality, had gone out of him.

This thought, that the Master was not merely using a divine power as an agent of God, but that he was using up his physical power for man's relief, should properly bring our hearts into very close touch and sympathy with him, and give us that much clearer view of the Savior's love, and that much better foundation for confidence in him in respect to all our affairs.

In the miracle under consideration in this lesson, our Lord's sigh may also have been, as with us, an evidence of physical weakness—the result of his bestowing of his vitality and energy in the cure of the patient. We are not to think of the death of Jesus, therefore, as having been entirely accomplished at Calvary. Rather are we to understand that it began at his consecration, at thirty years of age, at Jordan, and that it continued day after day, and year after year, and merely culminated and was finished at Calvary.

The day before his crucifixion our Lord intimated this. Speaking of his consecration unto death, he said, "My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death; I have a baptism to be baptized with, and how am I straitened until it be accomplished!" It was accomplished fully the following day, on Calvary, when he cried, "It is finished!" His baptism into death was accomplished.

"HE DOETH ALL THINGS WELL"

It is following the account of this miracle that we read that the multitude declared the words of our text. We are not, however, to understand that merely this one healing was the basis of their comment, for the account of these same instances by St. Matthew (15:29-31) tells of great multitudes gathered, having with them many lame, blind, dumb and maimed and many others, and they cast them down at his feet, and he healed them, insomuch that the multitudes wondered when they saw the dumb speak, the maimed to be whole, the lame to walk and the blind to see, and they glorified the God of Israel.

"MANIFESTED FORTH HIS GLORY"

Let us never lose sight of the great central thought connected with our Lord's miracles. His mission was not to heal the sick and to cast out devils, but to "give His life a ransom for all, to be testified in due time." The secondary feature of his work was the calling of the "Israelites indeed" to be his footstep followers, who would be received of the Father and begotten of the holy Spirit, at and after Pentecost. The miracles and cures performed were merely incidentals and not his real work. They were incidental in the sense that they were illustrations on a small scale of the great work which his kingdom will accomplish during the thousand years of his reign. Then "all the blind eyes shall be opened and all the deaf ears shall be unstopped."

It would have been a still greater and grander work for Jesus to have expounded the divine plan, and to have opened the eyes of the understanding of the people, and their deaf ears; but this work could not be accomplished to any extent until after he had ascended up on high, and had appropriated the merit of his sacrifice to the justification of believers. Hence it was that Jesus said to his disciples, "Greater works than these shall ye do, because I go to my Father."

And so it is today that the followers of Jesus are permitted to do greater things than he did, greater than any of those miracles, because it is surely a greater miracle to open the mental eyes than to open the physical; to unstop the mental ears is more wonderful than to open the physical ears; to cause the dumb to sing praises to God in the spirit of their minds is still greater work than the giving of natural speech. It is not that we can do greater works than Jesus of ourselves, nor that we could do as great, for without him we could do nothing. As it was Jesus who did the cures accomplished by his apostles when he sent them forth to heal the sick and to cast out devils, so it is Jesus now who is doing these greater things through his consecrated people.

ANOTHER MULTITUDE MIRACULOUSLY FED

The account in the conclusion of this lesson, of the feeding of four thousand people with seven loaves, and the taking up of seven hampers of fragments, was another manifestation of Jesus' power, or as he would express it, of the divine power in him. When the five thousand were fed, five loaves and two fishes were used, and they were gotten from a small boy. In this case the disciples themselves had seven loaves, and gave their all for the feeding of the multitude, and all had sufficient; and the fragments, according to the Master's direction, were again collected.

It is worthy of note that in both cases the Master displayed frugality and encouraged economy on the part of his followers. No doubt it would have been just as easy for him to have created more delicate viands and in great variety. The loaves used then were the same as are used in Palestine today by the natives; they are about the size of our large buns and are made of the entire wheat, ground. Many of the strong natives of Egypt and Palestine seem to live almost exclusively on this bread, about two such small loaves constituting a meal. Quite possibly some of us would find ourselves equally healthy and strong on similarly plain food. It is for us to exercise faith in God and to partake of our daily bread with grateful hearts; there will be a blessing in it, however plain.

THE HOLY SCRIPTURES THE SOURCE OF TRUE WISDOM

It is possible that even the Lord's people may sometimes fail to appreciate the value of that great Book, the Bible, which has exerted more influence in the world than all other books combined. Few realize that the Bible has been in the hands of the public for only about one century. When our oldest Bible Societies were organized, Bibles were possessed by the rich alone. Now they are to be found in every house and can be obtained free of cost by the destitute. Additionally, many helps to Scripture study are in print and people are learning the value of some of these and the usefulness of Bible Concordances.

Furthermore, we are prone to forget that general knowledge has just begun to reach the masses. It is not more than a dozen years since education has been made compulsory in all the most civilized lands. Thus God has favored our day in a two-fold manner—by giving us the Bible and by giving the intelligence necessary to its study.

HIGHER CRITICISM THE MOST DANGEROUS ENEMY TO FAITH

But just as these most precious opportunities are in the hands of the masses, just as these blessings of increased knowledge are being given to humanity, just as Christendom is prepared for Bible Study, the Lord has allowed the adversary to bring forward the most subtle influence in opposition to the Scriptures. The foul-mouthed infidelity of the past has been supplanted by a far more dangerous enemy to Christion faith—the infidelity generally known as "Higher Criticism," especially dangerous because of its insidious character.

Higher Criticism has entrenched itself in nearly all the colleges and theological seminaries of Christendom. While all of our churches of all denominations ostensibly stand as defenders of the Bible, yet the citadel of faith is being captured by the great adversary of God and the truth—Satan—who is deceiving, estranging and misleading the hosts of Christendom through the very theological professors and doctors of divinity to whom they have been led to look for spiritual light and direction and whom they had supposed to be stanch defenders of the Bible as the inspired Word of God.

This arraignment is severe, but it is a generally truthful one, as each may demonstrate for himself. Most regretfully we are persuaded that four out of every five of all the ministers and Sunday School superintendents of Christendom have ceased to believe in the Bible as the Divinely inspired revelation of the will and the purposes of the Almighty. Some of these, nevertheless, claim to be earnest followers of Jesus, as the Son of God and of divine origin. Yet how weak is their position! If Moses did not write the law, if that law is not inspired, what shall we think of Jesus and his apostles, who accepted these writings as inspired and founded all their teachings thereupon? Most evidently, Higher Critics who still believe in Jesus as the divine Son of God have not thought logically on the proposition, and upon further reflection will reject everything pertaining to the Scriptures.

THOUSANDS ARE FALLING INO INFIDELITY

While sorrowfully we behold the fulfilment of the Scriptures in the falling away of these our friends who have been ensnared by the great fowler (Psa. 91:3), we are not compelled by anything either in reason or in the Scriptures to suppose that their punishment for such infidelity will be eternal torment. We feel sure that the Lord's people are growing stronger in their faith day by day, even though as foretold by the Scriptures a thousand shall fall at their side and ten thousand at their right hand.—Psa. 91:7.

The study of the Bible with the assistance which God now provides is clearing up the mysteries which have perplexed us all our lives and is bringing us to greater appreciation of his glorious purposes, to greater loyalty to him and to a more earnest desire to serve his cause of righteousness and to lift up the standard of the Cross of Christ. Truly, as the Lord through the Prophet has promised, our feet have been kept from stumbling, because the greater intelligence of our day has lifted us up to a higher plane of devotion and appreciation of the heights and depths and lengths and breadths of the love of God, which passeth all understanding!

SOME MAY BE RECOVERED FROM THE SNARE OF THE FOWLER

We are not speaking harshly nor unkindly of our dear friends who are stumbling over the educational opportunities of our day. On the contrary, we sympathize with them. Once we stood exactly where they stand. Once we repudiated the Bible as the Word of God. We were as honest then as we are today, and feel bound to give credit to others for equal honesty. We explain their position by the realization of the fact that they are blinded by the dazzling glare of the earthly science of our day. If they ever knew the Scriptures, they have forgotten and have dropped the Science which comes only from above. We trust that some of them may be recovered from the snare of the adversary, as were we.

There is, however, a marked difference between the position of the so-called Higher Critics and that of ourself. The majority of them seem to exult in their unbelief and to pride themselves upon opposition to the Bible, while our position was the very reverse of this. We deplored the necessity for abandoning the Bible. We considered it the rational thing to expect from the Supreme Creator some revelation of his purposes respecting mankind—the object of their creation, the purpose to be attained by the permission of evil and kindred themes. This revelation we had hoped the Bible to contain.

We have no doubt that many of you have had experiences similar to our own. Let us hope that as we have been recovered from the snare of the fowler, so also may some others be. Let us be prompt to lend the helping hand and to give an encouraging word. Let us realize that to the honest-hearted the loss of the Bible must mean disaster to faith and hope, as it was in our own case. Let us trust that there are many others as honest as ourselves, who will yet be recovered. Let us be encouraged to help them by a remembrance of how great a blessing came to us through the proper understanding of the Word.

INTERESTING QUESTIONS

WILL GREAT COMPANY HAVE PART IN FIRST RESURRECTION?

Question.—Will the great company have part in the first resurrection?

Answer.—Those in the first resurrection will live and reign with Christ a thousand years. (Rev. 20:4, 6) Therefore those of the great company will have no part whatever in the first resurrection. The Apostle Paul speaks of Christ's resurrection—"That I might know him and the power of his resurrection and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made comfortable unto his death." (Phil. 3:10) This is the first resurrection.

There are, however, two other Scriptures which include the great company: Heb. 12:23, where the Apostle speaks of the church of the first-borns whose names are written in heaven, and Rev. 21:27, where mention is made of those whose names are written in the Lamb's Book of Life. All will attain life on the spirit plane, whose names are written in the Book of the Lamb, and the Lord said that he would not blot out the names of any overcomers.—Rev. 3:5.

Do the great company overcome? Yes. God has no blessings to give to those who are not overcomers. What is the difference between the great company and the little flock? The difference is that the little flock are those who are more than loyal to God. The great company will be loyal to God in that they will not withhold their lives when the test shall come. They will perish rather than deny the Lord; and thus they will experience the destruction of the flesh. But they did not go forth with sufficient zeal to carry out their consecration. They were loyal to God, but they did no more than maintain their loyalty.

Then we have our Lord's statement as recorded in John 5:28, 29: "For the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life." This will include both the little flock and the great company; both classes will get eternal life. If this statement includes the ancient worthies, then it means three classes: the little flock, the great company and the ancient worthies, though there will be different planes of perfection—human perfection, then the perfection that will be like that of the angels, and lastly the perfection that will come to those who shall be like Christ, namely, that of the divine nature.

"WISDOM—RIGHTEOUSNESS—SANCTIFICATION—REDEMPTION"

Question.—In what way was our Lord made unto us wisdom, righteousness [justification], sanctification and redemption?—I Cor. 1:30.

Answer.—In a great variety of ways our Lord was made unto us wisdom. He is the Head of the church which is his body. And as the head is the center of knowledge, so the Lord Jesus is the Head of his church. But the particular thought of the text seems to be that of a progressive order. Looking, then, to see how Jesus was our wisdom before he became our justifier and sanctifier, we perceive that the Scriptural declaration is that "no man cometh to the Father but by" our Lord.

Previous to justification the Father draws, for none can come to Christ except through the Father. After the Father has drawn, the wisdom comes from Christ, who instructs us how to come to the Father. Just as the disciples were instructed by our Lord, so it is all the way down throughout the age. There is no other way by which men may be saved—"None other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved."

Sinners could not be acceptable to the Father except by the way of justification such as the Father has provided. This justification means their blessing. "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." (Matt. 11:28) We need to be instructed. The light was not prior to Jesus Christ; for we read that he is the light. He makes that statement himself: "I am the light of the world; he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life."—John 1:9; 8:12.

This wisdom was first promulgated by our Lord. So the same wisdom which instructed his disciples guides men back to the Father, instructs them as to what discipleship means, makes them wise in order that they may take the steps by which that discipleship is to be gained. Whoever will be his disciples must take up their cross and follow him. No matter in what way one may get the wisdom, it comes to him from our Lord Jesus Christ; and without this wisdom we could not know how to come to God. No one can ever come to God without this wisdom. And so his wisdom instructs what will be the reward of discipleship.

Our Lord appeared in the presence of God for us—on our behalf. Thus, according to the Father's plan and arrangement, he became the justifier of those who come to the Father by him, and none can get the justification except by assisting them in everything necessary to their sanctification. They have the will to do, and as they have this will, so now he works in them a sanctified character in life.

This course being followed, the one who has the wisdom of the narrow way first obtains justification through our Lord's blood and then justification through following in the Lord's footsteps. Finally comes the deliverance [redemption] by the first resurrection. The One who led us all the way is the One who leads us still and who will finally lead us into the New Jerusalem, the glorious condition beyond the veil.

FORGIVENESS OF ALL SIN

Question.—"If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." (1 John 1:9) How comprehensive is the word "all" here used?

Answer.—Except sin against the holy Spirit (Matt. 12:31, 32), all manner of sin amongst the sons of men shall be forgiven, either in this age or in the age to come. The holy Spirit here denotes a light, an intelligence, respecting God's

purpose. Whoever wilfully and intelligently would sin against Jesus, would be guilty of blasphemy against the holy Spirit. But if he blaspheme the name of Jesus, being deceived in some way, then the sin is not blasphemy against the holy Spirit and may be forgiven. In the case of the church, these forgivable sins will be forgiven through the Advocate, who has appeared for us in the heavenly court and can restore us to favor with the Father, unless we sin against full light and knowledge. To do this would be to take ourselves out of his hands.

But there might be a sin partly wilful—a sin in which both superstition or weakness and a certain amount of wilfulness had a part. As to how this would be possible we answer that there is a difference between the forgiveness of the moral obliquity and the sin. For instance, a child has committed some trespass and the parent says, "I will punish you for what you have done." There might be two parts of the punishment, one corporal punishment, the other the displeasure of the parent.

With some children the latter part of the punishment, the cloud between the child and parent, would be unbearable. Then the parent might say, "Since you tell me that you are sorry and that you will never do it again, I forgive you. But I told you that there would be a penalty attaching to disobedience. I will make the penalty as light as would seem best in my judgment, but you must still bear punishment." And that which would be proper for an earthly parent we may consider might be done by the Heavenly Father.

In the case of the Prophet David: he committed two very serious, grievous sins—one in respect to Uriah and Uriah's wife, and the other in respect to Uriah's death. But we remember with what perseverance David pleaded with the Lord; and though the Lord indicated His forgiveness, yet there must be a punishment. David's child died.—2 Sam. 12:15-22.

Again, Satan provoked David to number Israel, contrary to the command of the Lord; God was displeased and smote Israel. Again David repented and prayed earnestly for forgiveness. The Lord offered him three things, one of which he must choose as the punishment for his sin. "Thus," saith the Lord, "Choose thee either three years' famine; or three months to be destroyed before thy foes, or else three days the sword of the Lord, even the pestilence in the land, and the angel of the Lord destroying throughout all the coasts of Israel." (1 Chron. 21:10-14) Realizing his own weakness, David, in humility declined to make a choice. The three days' pestilence was sent upon Israel, and there fell seventy thousand men; but in the meantime, before the punishment reached David, he had received the Lord's forgiveness for his sin.

So with the sins of the Lord's people. If there is more or less of ignorance, then the punishment is in proportion to the amount of wilfulness. Temptations come to us and to all mankind. Christ died for man's sin, from which he freely absolves the whole human family—the church now, and the world in their day of trial.

INTERESTING LETTERS

MY DEAR PASTOR RUSSELL:—

We are now paying our 15th annual visit as evangelists to our native county of Worcestershire, and being supplied from your London depot with two large parcels of your publications, we are entering upon a new phase of the Mission. We have already distributed large quantities in Sydenham and London. I regard them as direct and powerful weapons of destruction against (1) Darwin's doctrine of Evolution; (2) Roman Catholicism; (3) John Calvinism; (4) The natural immortality of the soul; (5) The ferocious doctrine of eternal torment in hell; (6) The monkish teaching of an eternal devil;—and reconstruction in favor of (1) A Scriptural mode of exegesis of the Bible; (2) The true science of geology and the creation of the earth, involving its perpetuity; (3) The divinity of Christ on which doctrine the ransom-price is paid; (4) God's "plan" of destroying evil and establishing everlasting righteousness as one Jehovah; (5) Making future life depend on resurrection; (6) The doctrine of restitution "of all things spoken by the mouth of the holy prophets since the world began."

In these books issued by your Society there is a grace and power of expression which, accompanied by high intelligence, makes them most suitable to place in the hands of all classes, the religious and the irreligious alike, and therefore the uncompromising spirit of toleration and the absence of offensive dogma breathed through every page of these writings reflect great credit upon both the publishers and the author. They are well adapted to accomplish the work for which they are intended. I am pleased, even delighted, at having discovered such labor and laborers in the Master's vineyard and I hope heartily to co-operate in such labors until "the laborer's task is o'er" and we are called to higher services.

The teachings are not new to me as you will have observed from my publications, but although David and Solomon were closely related, and deeply interested in God's purposes, what David was not called upon nor permitted to do, Solomon in due time accomplished.

"God moves in a mysterious way
His wonders to perform."

He is the Great Supreme. Praise His Holy Name!

Yours in the hope of Christ, (Rev.) J. MARTIN.

DEAR PASTOR RUSSELL:—

I have been enjoying the light of present truth for two and a half years. The vow did not appeal to me when first I read it, but as time passed I realized the narrowness of the way and in November last I decided to take the vow, and have been greatly blessed by so doing. In times of trial it has been a great help to know that others of like precious faith are praying for me. The part that helps me most is scrutinizing my thoughts and words.

Before coming into present truth I was a member of the M. E. Church. When my husband received present truth I felt very much worried about him and asked my Pastor if he had ever heard of MILLENNIAL DAWN books. He told me that the books were worse than poison; if they were branded poison, no one would touch them. As my husband attended the church with me I asked the minister to call and have a talk with him, but he never came and I thought he did not do his duty; so I left the church and went to a mission. My friends and I prayed earnestly for my husband and at last I pleaded with our Heavenly Father to show me if I was wrong and my husband was right.

In a short time I got the "hell" theory cleared up; having a dear brother burned to death who did not profess to be a Christian, and, having asked fully one dozen ministers where he was and gotten ten different answers, it almost made me an unbeliever in the Bible!

May the dear Father continue to bless you! Grace be to you, and peace from our Lord Jesus Christ!

Brother Moody and I send our names, as we have taken the Vow.

With Christian love,

MR. AND MRS. EDWIN R. MOODY.—Can.

BROTHER RUSSELL'S ITINERARY

Lv.	Halifax	I. C. Ry.	8:00 a. m.	(A. T.)	Mon.	Sept.	30
Ar.	Hamilton	G. T. Ry.	5:43 p. m.	(E. T.)	Mon.	Oct.	1
Lv.	"	"	3:45 p. m.	"	Wed.	"	2
Ar.	London	"	6:30 p. m.	"	"	"	2
Lv.	"	"	11:35 a. m.	"	Thu.	"	3
Ar.	Flint	"	2:10 p. m.	(C. T.)	"	"	3
Lv.	"	P. M. Ry.	3:35 p. m.	"	"	"	3
Ar.	Saginaw	"	4:20 p. m.	"	"	"	3
Lv.	"	"	12:30 noon	"	Fri.	"	4
Ar.	G'd Rapids	"	4:20 p. m.	"	"	"	4
Lv.	"	"	11:30 p. m.	"	"	"	4
Ar.	Chicago	"	6:55 a. m.	"	Sat.	"	5
Lv.	"	C. & A. Ry.	9:00 a. m.	"	"	"	5
Ar.	Springfield	"	2:25 p. m.	"	"	"	5

SPECIAL INTEREST TO VOLUNTEERS

In view of the world-wide discussion of the "Hell-fire and Brimstone" question, as a result of the public repudiation of certain erroneous ideas connected with that subject by the I. B. S. A. in recent convention at Washington, D. C., a special edition of the PEOPLE'S PULPIT, Vol. IV, No. 7, has been prepared. It consists mainly of press comments and expressions from eminent clergymen, Catholic and Protestant, respecting the I. B. S. A. Anti-hell-fire Resolution. A large quantity of said issue are now being printed for general use as a supplementary volunteer number for this year. We would not discourage the output of our regular volunteer edition, but believe this to be an opportune time to immediately cover again your territory with this "Hell-fire and Brimstone" edition. Order freely as many as you can use.

VIEWS FROM THE WATCH TOWER

ZIONISM FAVORED BY TURKEY

Palestine lifts up its head with hope. The new Governor of Jerusalem has recently made a most sympathetic pronouncement. It is believed that he voices the sentiment of the Turkish Government. Everywhere the Pacha, Muhdi Bey, is enthusiastically received by the Jewish colonists. The principal of these, Richon-le-Zion, gave a gala dinner in the Pacha's honor. At it the colonists expressed unswerving fidelity of the Jews to the Ottoman Constitutional Government.

The Governor made quite a lengthy speech, the substance of which is reported as follows:

"Gentlemen, allow me first of all to thank you for the hearty reception you have accorded me.

"You have undoubtedly heard from both people and press abroad that our Government objects to Zionism. This is incorrect. We, Ottomans, know the Jews too well to suspect them of disloyalty.

"We know that the Jews do not come to Palestine for mere political reasons. It is the holy associations connected with this land that act magnetically upon them; therefore our Ottoman Government has no reason to oppose Zionism.

"History proves that Turkey has always welcomed the Jews in times of persecution and distress, and we have embraced with open arms the exiles from Judæ-phobian countries.

"We rejoice to see the wonderful progress you have made in Palestine during the few years of your indefatigable labors, and you are this day a model for the Arab villagers around you. You are an object lesson to your native neighbors, who can neither read nor write, that they may see the great possibilities of the land. I therefore lay before you the following proposition:

THE GOVERNMENTAL PROPOSAL

"In order that your life and property may be placed beyond jeopardy, it is your bounden duty to establish yourselves on a firm basis, and this is what you should do.

"Choose from among yourselves a municipal head, whose appointment will be ratified by the Government, to administer justice and execute judgment according to the rules and regulations of the Ottoman provinces.

"You will have to appoint guards and gendarmes, whose names will be registered by the local government, which will provide them with uniforms and all necessary accoutrements and invest them with authority.

"You must also install telephonic communication between colony and colony, village and village, so that any attack or outrage may at once be notified at headquarters and the marauders be apprehended and punished.

"I know there are unlimited possibilities in this land, but we are unfortunately still handicapped. I trust, however, that little by little the goal will be reached, to the great benefit of the country.

"For my part, I will try to put you in possession of the sand-hills bordering on the seashore and give you legal title-deeds for the same.

"A part of it I will allot you for a capacious Government Building which will serve as your central administrative premises.

"Brethren and kinsmen, give your helping hands to the Government, and the Government, on her part, will aid you on to further progress."

"THY KINGDOM COME"!

The following from a worldly standpoint sticks closely to the predictions of the Bible, hence we reproduce them from *Woman's World:*—

JUST A FEW GROWING PAINS.

"Coal strikes in England and America—revolution in Mexico—anarchy in China—Italy at the throat of Turkey—woman clamoring for the vote!

"What of it? There's no cause to be pessimistic—nothing's really the matter with the world—just growing pains!

"Progress has set herself a sudden and terrific pace. The earth has been spinning faster in the last twenty years than it ever before whirled. Naturally, there's a bit of displacement in spots, but nothing hurt.

"We can't very well apply electricity to a thousand uses, go snooping among the clouds, universalize education, introduce penny journalism, and give science a free rein without some trivial consequences.

"Old viewpoints are sure to shift, old creeds must give way to new ideals, society is bound to readjust its divisions.

"The ancient molds of thought and economics, religion and government, are splitting. Our eyes see truths which our ancestors could not behold and by their light we perceive their errors and their inadequacies.

"The greatest revolutions that have ever swept the universe will break within the coming hundred years.

"Before this century is closed, the last king shall have lost his throne, the last battleship shall be scrapped, the last army shall have junked its guns. East and West shall meet in a thousand common causes and the Five Races join hands in brotherhood.

"Perfected wireless telephony and telephotography, mile-a-second trains and airships will condense the seas and continents into ponds and back lots.

"Africa will become a week-end resort for the New Yorker, and the Canadian farmer will press a button, lift his receiver and exchange crop gossip with his son in Siberia.

"Pain will be banished. Surgery will have accomplished the relief of insanity and blindness. Cancer, tuberculosis, paralysis, will be as easily cured as sprains and lumbago.

"There will be no waste in food nor in land. The air will yield its wealth of nitrates to the condensers and every arable acre will luxuriate with vegetation.

"The stored heat of the sun will furnish power and warmth for all humanity. Plagues and pests will disappear.

"Eugenics will regulate society; men and women will mate by definite laws; efficient organization will check economic spendthrifty and eradicate poverty; engineering will solve the problems of competent housing, ventilation and sunlight; the standardization of health and of welfare will extirpate prostitution and crime.

"A dream? Not a bit of it!

"A far-fetched vision? You are wrong!

"No imagination can pierce the horizons that cloak the tomorrow from our sight.

"The farthest-flung optimism can only estimate a fragment of man's coming glories. How can you sneer!

"Turn back and view the fifty years behind you. What prophet in your father's youth would have dared proclaim the many magics of today?

"Strikes, revolts and wars are but chips that fly beneath the chisel of progress.

"There will be many wars, mobs will rage, battles will wage, tyranny will clutch with strangling fingers, bigotry will plot, avarice will scheme—but to what will these avail?"

THE NEW CREATURE'S RESPONSIBILITY TO DIVINE LAW

PART 3—RESURRECTION OF CHURCH DIFFERENT FROM THAT OF WORLD

We shall now consider some texts which are not generally understood, but which will enable us to set forth clearly the sharp distinction between the resurrection of the church and that of the world in general.

In 1 Thess. 4:14, 16 the Apostle Paul mentions two classes—"those who sleep in Jesus" and "the dead in Christ." Our Lord's ransom-sacrifice accomplished on Calvary has changed the future of the Adamic race, so that they may now be said to "sleep in Jesus." The world, therefore, is not to be considered as extinct, eternally dead, but as asleep, waiting for the time foreordained of the Father, when "all that are in the graves shall hear his voice [the voice of the Son of God] and shall come forth."—John 5:28, 29.

"The dead in Christ," however, is an expression applicable only to the elect church. The call to be baptized into Christ (the Anointed) is an offer which is restricted to the "called and chosen and faithful" church of the Gospel age. The Apostle is here referring to those who have been begotten of the holy Spirit, and later have fallen asleep in death.

But they are not to be considered dead in the same sense in which the world is dead in Adam. "The dead in Christ" are the dead, who are to have the resurrection of the dead—the first resurrection—the chief resurrection. The others will be of the subsequent resurrection. We are not to understand, however, that these "dead in Christ" were dead as new creatures, but that as far as the flesh was concerned their death was fully accomplished.

The term "asleep" has been applied to both classes. Those of the world who go down into death are still in the unsatisfactory condition in which they died and will come forth in the

same state, in order that they may rise from it. But those who now belong to Christ will experience an instantaneous resurrection, and will receive new bodies like unto the Lord's glorious body.

The church really begin to rise from the time when they become new creatures; and unless we begin this rising now we shall not have the change—"in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye," at the end of our course. (1 Cor. 15:51, 52) These shall not come forth under a future judgment, or trial, but in their change will pass fully from death unto life—into the glorious reward, the divine nature.

"THE SPIRIT RETURNS TO GOD"

"Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was; and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it."—Eccl. 12:7.

This text has no special reference to the church. It has a general application to all mankind as they die. There can be no question as to what is meant by the first part of the text, for human bodies have crumbled to dust for centuries. The latter part of the text is wholly misunderstood by many Christians. It has no reference to the breath or anything returning through the air to God.

The thought is this: When God created Adam, he gave him a life that would continue forever if he would be obedient. When Adam sinned God did not take away the spirit of life immediately. He allowed man to hold on to that spirit of life just as many years as he could, battling with the thorns and thistles until the "breaking of the silver cord."

Adam transmitted a portion of that spirit of life to his children, in some of whom that portion of life continued for centuries. But mankind have no right to that spirit of life; it is merely something transmitted to them by their parents. God recognizes none as having a right to live except those who are in harmony with him—those who are perfect. Since the fall all mankind have lived without a right to live. Therefore, from the divine standpoint the whole world is spoken of as legally dead. Every right to life from the divine standpoint is forfeited. No one can say to God, "I have a right to live." God could say, "You have no right to live; for your first parents sinned and thus lost that right."

Adam could not give to his descendants what he had lost. When Adam died he gave up the spirit of life; that is, he no longer held that portion of life which he had held for nine hundred and thirty years. Where did that spirit of life go? It went back to God from whom it had come originally. Everything goes back to God. Adam could not say to his children, "I bequeath my life-rights to you"; for he had none. No one but God can give a right to life.

"The spirit returns to God who gave it." When one who has possessed the right to life has forfeited it, he cannot say that he has a right to life or to anything. There is no way to get life other than through Christ.

"NOT OF THE DEAD, BUT OF THE LIVING"

"The God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob . . . is not a God of the dead, but of the living."—Luke 20:37, 38.

When we note the context we see that our Lord was combatting the theory of the Sadducees, and proving that Abraham and Isaac and Jacob would have a resurrection. Jesus said, "Now that the dead are raised, even Moses showed at the bush, when he calleth the Lord the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob." (Luke 20:37) If they were dead in the sense that the beast is dead, God would never have spoken of them in this manner. They had come into accord with God, and he spoke of them in harmony with the general plan. St. Paul says, "There shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and of the unjust." (Acts 24:15) The ancient worthies had this testimony, that they pleased God; and we know that they had the promise of a better resurrection than would have been theirs if they had not pleased God.—Heb. 11:35.

These ancient worthies lived in exactly the same sense that the begotten new creatures live. Unless God raises us up from the dead there will be no resurrection. The same thing that applies to the new creatures in Christ applies to the world in general. They may think that those in the tomb are absolutely dead; but God intends that they shall have an awakening. So the Apostle speaks not only of those who are asleep in Christ, but also of those who are asleep in Jesus. Those who are asleep in Christ are those who had become new creatures in Christ, heirs of God, partakers of the divine nature and have passed into death. These are spoken of as "the dead in Christ" who shall rise first.

Jesus is not the Savior merely of the church, but also the Savior of the world. (John 4:42; 1 John 4:14) He is the propitiation not only for our sins, "but also for the sins of the whole world." (1 John 2:2) Therefore, those who believe this statement—that there will be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and of the unjust—speak of the whole world in exactly the same way that they speak of those who have slept in Christ.

But in the awakening, those of the world who are asleep in Jesus will have the earthly nature, and those who have slept in Christ will have the higher nature. Christ gave his life as a corresponding price for man's life. But we who have come into the church have come under different conditions altogether from those of the world. As Jesus said, "Ye are not of the world." (John 15:19) We are separate and distinct from the rest of the world. The Apostle tells us that our life comes from the Father—"the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ."—1 Peter 1:3.

Does Jesus do nothing for the church? Yes, indeed! As Advocate he imputes of his merit to the church that we may be counted in as joint-sharers of his sacrifice, for "if we suffer [with him], we shall also reign with him." (2 Tim. 2:12) This willingness to suffer is the covenant of sacrifice that we make with our Lord. Without him we can do nothing. We can never come up to the divine standards as he did; but as our Advocate he makes good our deficiencies. We have the same begetting of the holy Spirit by the same Father and we shall also share in the same resurrection, being made conformable to his death. The resurrection of Christ is to the divine nature, in which we shall be "changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye."—1 Cor. 15:51, 52.

The world will receive earthly resurrection. The Life-Giver, Jesus, will give to them all that was lost—human nature and the Edenic condition. So then, the dead world is said to be asleep, but they are to be awakened. Theirs is exactly the same kind of sleep as with us; but the church were asleep as new creatures and the world are not.

"GOD GIVETH IT A BODY"

"Thou sowest not that body that shall be, but bare grain, it may chance of wheat or of some other grain; but God giveth it a body as it hath pleased him."

Here is the thought: Mankind belong to the Adamic nature. The kind of nature that God has been pleased to give to the Adamic race is earthly nature. But if we belong to the spirit nature we shall come up accordingly. If you plant corn, you will reap corn; if you plant wheat, you will reap wheat; if you plant barley, you will reap barley. So in death. If an animal body is sown, the animal body will be raised. The church is an exception to the rule. We new creatures are sown as animal bodies, but we have these animal bodies merely loaned to us, in which to operate. We are new creatures, not human beings. We are sown natural bodies, we are raised spirit bodies, in the first resurrection.

THE TWO RESURRECTIONS

"The hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of judgment."—John 5:28, 29, R. V.

The divine provision is that through the obedience of One, the sins of the whole world will be atoned for, and a blessing come to every member of the Adamic race. By a man came death, and by a man comes the resurrection of the dead. (1 Cor. 15:21-23) We have two classes here; they that have done good are those who, during the present time, have heard the Gospel, and who have and use an opportunity to do good, and those who have done evil are those who have not heard and who have not, therefore, had an opportunity of doing good.

Who can be said to have done good? "There is none righteous, no, not one." (Rom. 3:10) After having received this good Word of God we should make good use of it, enter into the school of Christ to be taught of him, and pass through our trials and testings. These things will determine whether or not we are worthy of this high position, to attain which we have consecrated our lives.

But we shall not in this life be perfect as Jesus was—in body as well as in mind. We cannot be perfect in the flesh, as Jesus was; but Jesus had a perfect will, and we can also have a perfect will, although we may have drawbacks and hindrances in carrying out that will. But to cover our defects, we have our Advocate, in whom God has arranged that we may be accepted. The church have had their trial in advance of the world; and if they have overcome, God has said that the verdict will be, "Well done . . . I will make thee ruler over many things." (Matt. 25:21) These constitute the "good."

Who are they that have done evil? None have been perfect; not even in their minds have they come up to a standard that God can approve. They are unsatisfactory, which means unfit. When God shall have established the glorious Messianic kingdom, then he will put all mankind under trial to see whether, during the thousand years of his reign, the rewards and pun-

ishments will bring them to a proper condition of heart. At the end of the thousand years, Jesus, as Mediator, will present them to the Father for a final testing. If they pass that test, God will give them everlasting life. But those who take a thousand years to make good, will not get as high a reward as those who, by self-sacrifice, now prove their love for the truth and die for righteousness' sake.

"HIDE ME IN THE GRAVE"

"O that thou wouldst hide me in the grave, that thou wouldst keep me secret until thy wrath be past, that thou wouldst appoint me a set time, and remember me!"—Job 14:13.

This passage of Scripture refers, not to the New Creature, but to a human being. It refers to a man and not to a spirit-begotten son of God and member of Christ. Job was here speaking as one of mankind. He was willing to die, for life had become burdensome to him. He said, "Oh, that thou wouldst hide me in sheol until thy wrath be past!" In the midst of his very severe afflictions he cried, Oh, that I might die! but do not leave me as the brute creation; only hide me in the grave until all this time of wrath and sin and curse is done away with and the new era shall be ushered in. We can hardly believe that Job realized the meaning of what he was saying, but we should rather suppose that he was uttering words, the full import of which he did not realize.

There is no reason to suppose that when David said, "Thou wilt not leave my soul in sheol" (hell), he knew that he was speaking prophetically of the Messiah. St. Peter pointed out that these words referred, not to David, but to Christ, that his soul was not left in hell, neither did his flesh see corruption. (Acts 2:27-31) But Job was speaking for himself, and yet prophetically for mankind. He was a type of the world. He had lost his flocks and herds, his friends, his home, his children, his wife and even his health.

But in due time, God gave Job back as many sons and daughters and twice as many flocks and herds, etc. In this way he was a type of the human family. Adam and his family have been lost. He was the king of the earth, but he lost his authority, and with it everything that he had. Ultimately Adam and all of his children will come back to their own—child for child. And so far as the earthly riches were concerned, he will get very much more than he ever lost. Job is a type of this restitution.

The world is asleep from the divine standpoint. As Job could say, "Hide me in the grave," so once a Christian could have said, "I shall be hid in the grave until the resurrection." God has made provision for the resurrection of all. But did all die alike? We answer that the Adamic family are dead in the sense that their life-rights were forfeited at the time of the fall. But God looked forward and could speak prophetically either through Job or through any one else. Job could speak as if he were not dead, taking cognizance of the fact that there will be a resurrection. The point here seems to be, Was Job's life carried over in the same sense that St. Paul's life was carried over? By no means. Job was asleep in the Adamic death; St. Paul was asleep in Christ. The one was the life of the new creature, and the other was the life of the old creature, not begotten of the holy Spirit to the new creature.

THE LONDON AND GLASGOW CONVENTIONS

While only the meetings at Glasgow and London have been officially styled conventions, yet really we have had a series of conventions from the time we landed at Liverpool. In each place we had at least one meeting for the interested, as well as one meeting for the public. In every case the meetings for the interested were attended by friends from nearby places, and in every case the public meetings were simply splendid, the audiences ranging from five hundred to five thousand. And such attention! Evidently the message of the Lord's grace was attractive to many—and to some most precious and sweet.

The Glasgow convention, lasting three days, registered an attendance of the interested of about eight hundred, while the public meeting ran to five thousand, with hundreds turned away. A very loving spirit was manifested by the friends. Ireland, Scotland and England were well represented. It was good to be there! It was a season of refreshment long to be remembered. Those in attendance manifestly voted it the best convention they had ever enjoyed. The number immersed was 45.

The London convention was held in the Tabernacle, which was crowded beyond anything in past history. Friends from Scotland, Wales, Ireland and Sweden were in attendance; but of course the majority were Londoners and from the country round about. The average attendance at the meetings was about twelve hundred. We had a pleasant time. Again the friends declared that this was the best of all conventions and again we explained to them that it should be so—that we are all growing riper as the days and weeks go by, and that in proportion to our growth in grace should be our growth in appreciation of the blessed privileges we are enjoying, co-operating with our dear Redeemer in the glorious harvest work. Eighty-five were immersed at the Tabernacle.

The work in Great Britain seems to be prospering greatly. The Class Extension feature has been appreciated and utilized. Good results are noticed. Many have been brought to a clear knowledge of the truth, and some from a partial to a full consecration. We were greatly encouraged by our visit. The Lord has much people here, and we were pleased with the blessing which we see attending the efforts to bring them into touch with present truth.

"FIGHT THE GOOD FIGHT"

[This article was a reprint of that published in issue of June, 1888, which please see.]

OUR EUROPEAN CONVENTIONS

Our various stops in Europe were not announced as Conventions, but nevertheless they were more or less of that character, in that friends from the surrounding parts attended. Although our principal attention was given to the public meetings we greatly appreciated the opportunities of addressing those already interested. In every case we sought to leave practical lessons, and to show their relationship to the Scriptures.

We sought specially to impress the necessity for character development on the part of all hoping to share Christ's kingdom. We emphasized the brevity of the time for so great a work, provided our understanding of God's times and seasons be correct. We freely admitted, as we have always done, that we are walking by faith and not by sight. But we pointed out that the evidences seem more and more to corroborate our expectations. At the same time we suggested that should our expectations for October, 1914, not be realized—for years thereafter—this delay would not invalidate God's great plan nor our faith therein. Our consecration vow calls for faithfulness, "even unto death"—whenever death may come.

Leaving London our first stop was at Denain, France. The two meetings were for the interested—the attendance being about one hundred. The brethren, mostly coal-miners, manifested a deep and intelligent interest in the truth. We had a blessed season of rejoicing with them.

Our next stop was at Paris, where we had much pleasure in meeting and addressing the brethren, but no public meeting. Our friends considered the Trocadero the only suitable place. It was partially promised, but afterward refused. It is under Governmental control, and its regulation forbids that it be used for religious purposes.

On we went to Geneva—the chief city of Switzerland—Calvin's city. In the forenoon we visited Calvin's Cathedral and tried the hard wooden seat once used by the scholarly Reformer. Its hardness reminded us of the hard doctrine of the predestination of the non-elect to eternal torture.

We visited the monument erected to Servetus by the Free Thinkers. It pictured Servetus in jail in rags pleading vainly for a change of garments, and saying, "The lice are eating me up." It was shortly after that appeal that Servetus was roasted alive at the stake for four hours, with the wood fire just far enough away not to choke or asphyxiate him—that he might suffer the most horrible death imaginable. His crime was his inability to count "three times one is one." He was too honest to profess what he could not believe.

We visited the city of Servetus' execution and saw there the new monument to him erected by Calvin's friends as a partial atonement for their leader's error. It declares that they deplore the error and repudiate the crime as dishonoring to God

and man. We thank God that the world is progressing in the spirit of the truth, even though more slowly in the letter of it.

Our public meeting in Victoria Hall was well attended (about 1500), notwithstanding that it was out of season, we were told. (Calvin's Cathedral had only about 300 the same day.) The attention was excellent. We will hope for results later on. The Society's office for France and Switzerland will hereafter be at Geneva. It is a good centre for whatever of the old Huguenot Protestant influence yet remains in France and Switzerland.

Mulhausen, Als., came next in our journey. Although it rained incessantly the large hall was crowded and hundreds were turned away. The audience was exceptionally intelligent and gave closest attention. Some fruitage has already appeared. More will follow, we trust.

Basle came next in our itinerary. Here also we had the best hall and many standing and hundreds turned away.

This same report fits to the succeeding places—Zurich, St. Gallen, Munich, Reichenbach and Dresden. Splendid interest was manifested both before and after the meetings. The brethren, after follow-up meetings, assure us that an awakening of thought has stirred the people as they never were stirred by religion before.

DRESDEN'S WELCOME IN VERSE

Our welcome everywhere was with deepest manifestations of Christian love. This at Dresden was emphasized by its poetic form, so feelingly expressed that it brought tears to the eyes of those who understood the German. Later we obtained a copy of the address in German and also an English translation, which herewith we present:

(Translated from the German.)

[Dedicated in loving remembrance to our Dear Brother Russell on the occasion of his visit to Dresden, August 17th, 1912, by the Class at Dresden.]

Child of God, wait patiently and calmly, tho' steeper grows thy path,
Committed to his care whose grace thus far hath kept thee;
And tho' the night of trouble draweth on, with clouds both black and dense,
Follow faithfully the Lamb; the morrow will be light!

Child of God, rest fearlessly in him whose arm securely holds;
Thou mayst trust him as a child doth trust, because thou art his own.
And tho' the night be very long, thou art his child, be not dismayed,
Confiding in his Word, for it proclaims the light of morn.

Child of God, does his commission send thee out in all the world?
Thou shalt feel, yea, very surely, how he in his love upholds.
Proclaim in North, South, East and West the kingdom now in sight,
And gather in what still remains of children of the Light.

Child of God, pursue thy journey, as doth a star;
And when thy plea to heaven ascends, let us remembered be;
With thee, relying on his might, we come before his face;
No fear can trouble in the night, through which we pass to light.

The Berlin meeting for the interested (like the one at Dresden) showed a considerable gathering of the dear friends from the surrounding country—two from Russia. The hall for the public gathering held 2000, but it is estimated that 5000 were turned away. The acoustics of the hall were not the best, but a grand witness to the truth went forth. Some of the hearers manifested great interest.

Next came Elberfeld. We had the City Hall. Every seat was filled, about 200 stood and crowds were turned away. The audience here was one of the best, if we may judge from their intelligent appearance and close attention. The Barmen-Elberfeld region is one of the most religious in Germany. And, by the way, we learn that higher criticism and the evolution theory have made great havoc with Christian faith in Germany. We have it from several that not one person in ten believes in the Bible as a divine revelation; and our informants thought that even a personal, intelligent Creator is not believed in. If it is really half so bad it is terrible—"Without God and having no hope in the world."

Copenhagen, Denmark, was our next stop. Here we had fresh evidences of the warmth of the Danish sentiment. Our friends assembled in goodly numbers to our mutual joy. And the public meeting was a repetition of those of Germany. A crowded hall—hundreds turned away—intelligent and deep interest.

In Finland, a part of Russia, was our next appointment—at Helsingfors. Our first visit to the Finnish people was encouraging. We liked the people. Their humiliation at losing their liberty to Russia may be a blessing—working in them meekness and preparing some of them for the truth.

Two Finnish brothers have been specially active for two years to serve the truth to all the truth-hungry. They have translated three volumes of the SCRIPTURE STUDIES and EVERYBODY'S PAPER for free circulation, at their own expense. Now about fifteen colporteurs are carrying the truth to every nook and corner of the land.

The public meeting was crowded to the capacity of the hall —1000—many standing; some almost in tears because they could not gain admission. Certain seats were reserved for some of the elite of the city, but the crowd climbed through the windows, etc., and no seats could be kept; and those who had tickets for reserved seats could not get near the doors long before the time for beginning the lecture.

Here we were interpreted first in Swedish and afterward in Finnish, because the population is mixed. The evidence is that God has some true children in Finland to whom his harvest message is now due.

SUMMARY OF THE HARVEST-WORK IN FINLAND

The work in Finland is quite new. It seems to make excellent progress. The number of colporteurs engaged, and the fact that it is self-sustaining, speak well for the depth of interest The following report will prove interesting:

NOVEMBER 1, 1911, TO AUGUST 1, 1912.

STUDIES IN SCRIPTURES (Colporteurs 16)		9,792
Various booklets, TABERNACLE SHADOWS, *etc*		14,087
		23,879
Bibles sold		215
Number of subscribers to the Finnish PEOPLES PULPIT		500
Volunteer Tracts		185,000
Number of meetings held		357
Total attendance		37,866
Number of miles traveled in preaching tours		9,570
Letters and cards sent out		717
Letters and cards received		741
Total expenditures	Mk. 18,234:03	$3.646.81
Total receipts	Mk. 18,135:33	$3,623.07

Stockholm, Sweden, was one of our very interesting appointments. We addressed about 300 of the friends four times with great pleasure and, we trust, with profit. We also had a grand opportunity for a public witness, in the "Circus." About 1,500 were present notwithstanding it was a rainy forenoon. May God grant his blessing!

On our journey back to London we stopped at Kiel, Germany, where we had a repetition of our previous experiences—an earnest class of Bible students numbering about 30; a great crowd, and deep interest at the public meeting, and many turned from the doors with reading matter.

London got the evening before our start for Liverpool and Brooklyn. We had first a social meeting with the elders and deacons, and then a general meeting with the Tabernacle congregation, which was well represented. We concluded with a farewell; and, asked when we could return, we promised—"Soon as the Lord seems to indicate—possibly within six months!"

Arrived at our boat's wharf in Liverpool, we found about forty of the dear Liverpool friends waiting for us. They sang for us, "Blest be the tie that binds," and as we started—"God be with you till we meet again."

Some of the passengers afterward remarked to us the sweetness of the Farewell song! It reminded them of God and his protective power, and of human dependence on him, especially on the mighty deep.

Our home-coming was equally pleasant. About twelve of the Brooklyn elders met us at the pier as representatives of the class and especially of the family. And on our arrival at Bethel we had mutual felicitations, a hymn of praise to our God and a prayer of grateful thanks to His whose mercy endureth forever.

* * *

Nothing else, perhaps, better shows that we have the truth than does the fact that it produces the same spirit wherever it goes. From Maine to California, from Canada to Texas, from Great Britain to Japan—the spirit of God's people is the same. Why? Because ye were all baptized by one spirit into one body —Christ.

A SIGN FROM HEAVEN

MARK 8:11-26.—NOVEMBER 3.

"Jesus spake unto them, saying, I am the Light of the world; he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life."—John 8:12.

The Scribes and Pharisees — the leading religionists and teachers of Jesus' day—were perplexed and troubled by His success in reaching the people. True, those who heard him gladly were chiefly of the common people, whom the Jewish teachers had come to despise, terming them, "publicans and sinners," and refusing to recognize them as brethren. They considered Jesus a competitor and a successful one, and feared not without cause, that their own reputations as teachers were becoming tarnished because of the superiority of Jesus as a Teacher, whose "Wonderful Words of Life" touched the hearts of many.

These Pharisees came specially to find fault—"tempting" Jesus. They asked him for "a sign from heaven." Their real purpose was to belittle the many signs he was giving the people, in the healing of the sick, etc. Ignoring all these, they said, What sign can you give us from heaven? We want a heavenly sign; give us that and we will believe on you.

In order to be able to sympathize to some extent with the chief ruler of the Jews at that time, we must remember how different were the things which Jesus was doing in proof of his Messiahship from the things which they had supposed he would do. The prophecies told many things of Messiah, but they in reading them had given special heed to those which spoke of his glory and of the power that would come to the Jewish nation, and of the blessing which the Jewish nation would ultimately bestow upon all nations, for the blessing of the world during Messiah's kingdom. They overlooked, and did not study carefully enough or deeply enough other Scriptures of a totally different kind.

These other Scriptures tell of how Messiah would "be led as a Lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he would open not his mouth." (He would be "dumb" in the sense that he would not open his mouth to prevent his condemnation and death.) They told of how he would "preach deliverance to the captives," and the opening of the eyes of the blind, but these they associated with the glorious kingdom rather than with the period of Messiah's being "despised and rejected of men," and of their hiding their faces from him in shame, in disesteem.

True, they should have studied the Scriptures properly. It might be said that they were not at fault in making this mistake; in one sense that might be true. On the other hand, however, we are to remember that their difficulty really was pride of heart, and a know-it-all spirit. They lacked humility, and therefore were not teachable. The "Israelites indeed," who did accept Jesus' message, doubtless had similar misunderstandings of the prophecies, but they were open to conviction and ready to be led and guided, and to these the Master's teachings were attractive, blessed, wonderful. They were guided gradually to the correct understanding of each feature of the divine plan as it became due, and thus they became ready for the Pentecostal blessing in due time, and manifested themselves as part of the elect, which was choosing to be the bride of Messiah, and joint-heir in his kingdom.

NO SIGN BUT THAT OF JONAH

Our lesson tells that Jesus sighed deeply and said, "Why doth this generation seek after a sign?" and refused to give them a sign, and departed for the other side of the lake. Saint Matthew (16:1-4) gives a more detailed account of this question and its answer. Jesus called the attention of the Pharisees to the signs that he was giving in abundance to them, and then said that there would be one great sign given that nation; but it was not given until Calvary. That "sign" did have a great effect upon thousands of Jews, as is evidenced by the account in Acts of the thousands who were baptized on Pentecost day, and subsequently, upon hearing Saint Peter's preaching respecting the death of Jesus, his three days in the tomb and his resurrection on the third day.

Jesus cited the sign of Jonah, that as he was (portions of) three days and nights in the belly of the fish, so the Son of Man would be a similar period in the earth, and as Jonah came forth, so the Son of Man would come forth.

We leave it for Higher Critics to fight out amongst themselves the proposition they raise in opposition to our Lord's statement. According to Higher Critics, Jesus and the Apostles were badly deceived, in every sense of the word; but according to Jesus and the Apostles, the Higher Critics are badly deceived. We prefer to stand by the Word of God, let who will take the "wisdom of men."

THE LEAVEN OF THE PHARISEES

After entering the boat Jesus cautioned his disciples against the doctrine of the Pharisees—he likened it to leaven—yeast. Leaven is a ferment, which spreads, especially in dough for bread. God's Word is truth, the bread upon which his people are to feed. But they are to use the unleavened bread—pure bread, pure truth, unmixed with the leaven of human philosophy.

This caution was necessary because the Pharisees were apparently and really the most holy sect or party amongst the Jews. The most earnest and most zealous and most gifted Jews would therefore naturally be attracted to that sect. Its claimed association with the highest and best things made the sect and its teachings the more dangerous, because its bread, its truth, was intermingled with human traditions which would make sick and dyspeptic, and to that extent poison all the minds which received it.

The same lesson is applicable to us today; no matter how holy any denomination of Christians may claim to be and seem to be, we are to remember to beware of their "leaven," their false doctrine—to be on the lookout for it, to avoid it. It is the pure truth of God's Word that is able to make us "wise unto salvation" and which, the Apostle says, "is sufficient, that the man of God may be thoroughly furnished unto every good work."

Let us all, then, as Christians of all denominations, unite our hearts and minds in full consecration to our Lord and Redeemer to do the Heavenly Father's will; and let us stand free and clear from all the "leaven" in all the various creeds, which in the past have done so much to separate the people of the Lord into six hundred denominations. We deprecate this division as more and more bearing in upon God's people everywhere, and more and more we desire to unite the earnest hearts under one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father over all, and one "church of the first-born, whose names are written in heaven."

"PERCEIVE YE NOT YET?"

The disciples very stupidly missed the point of Jesus' parabolic statement about the leaven of the Pharisees. They at once thought of literal leaven and literal bread, and noted that they had only one loaf with them and supposed that the Master was upbraiding them. Their mental eyes, their eyes of understanding, were not very widely open, and Jesus promptly and very plainly told them so, and apparently with a measure of chagrin, that after all the teaching he had given them they should be so slow to perceive the spirit of his words.

He reminded them of the miracle of the five thousand fed with the five loaves, and asked them how many basketfuls of fragments they collected. They answered, "Twelve." He reminded them of the other feedings of the four thousand with seven loaves, and asked them how many baskets were taken up. They answered, "Seven." He said, How, then, do you not understand that I was not finding fault with you for having only one loaf; surely, if I had the power to produce bread before, I have still that power, and could not have referred to your lack of bread.

The same thing is noticeable today amongst the Lord's people in Bible Study frequently; the spirit of our Lord's teachings is often missed altogether by some whose minds center merely around some little incidental. The remedy for this is a closer walk with God; a more careful study of the divine Word, entering into the spirit of the Master and his work, as footstep followers. In this connection let us not forget the difficult "thorns" which another parable tells us so frequently infest the hearts and minds of God's people and hinder the Word of Truth from bringing forth its proper fruitage. The "thorns" are "the cares of this life and the deceitfulness of riches," Jesus said.

Arriving at Bethsaida a blind man was brought to him with a desire that he would heal him. Jesus took him by the hand and led him out beyond the village. He spat upon his eyes and put his hands upon him and asked him if he saw anything. He looked up and said that he saw something that looked like trees moving about which he supposed to be men. Again Jesus put his hands upon his eyes and bade him look once more. He did so and saw clearly. The object in employing this method is not clear to us, but quite probably the man himself lacked faith and Jesus was gradually developing it in him. This thought is borne out by the final statement that the man looked steadily, and kept looking for some time, and then declared that he could see everything clearly. Apparently the Lord required the man to exercise his full power of will and to strive to see things.

"COME AND LET US RETURN"

ISAIAH 5:7-16.—NOVEMBER 10.

"Woe unto them that rise up early in the morning, that they may follow strong drink; that tarry late into the night, till wine inflame."—Vs. 11.

Today's lesson had its primary force in connection with the affairs of Natural Israel in the days of the Prophet. But when we remember that Natural Israel types Christendom we find a value in this lesson very pertinent for our time. As the Lord called Israel his vineyard so did he with Christendom. "And he looked for judgment [justice], but, behold, oppression; for righteousness [equity] and, behold, a cry" of distress, As to the national cry and the reason for it, see verse eight, which reads:

"Woe unto them that join house to house, that lay field to field, till there be no place, that they may be placed alone in the midst of the earth!" Here we perceive that a spirit of selfishness prevailed in Isaiah's day, as it does today; as then property was disposed to accumulate in the hands of the more successful, so it is today. As then landlordism took possesion of vast areas, neglected of the fact that "the earth hath the Lord given unto the children of men," and not merely to a few of them, so is it today.

Only by the most strenuous laws, and in some cases revolution, have the people maintained a hold of considerable portions of the earth. The French Revolution broke up the large holdings there; special laws have thrown open the lands of Ireland. In the United States large corporations have grasped immense bodies of land, some of which unlawfully seized have been restored to the people for a more equitable distribution. As in Isaiah's day, many of the wealthy seemed to ignore the rights of the people and to be indifferent to their necessities, so it is today. We are not to overlook the fact that there are many noble, generous souls amongst the rich, as well as amongst the poor; we are merely calling attention to the parallelism between the conditions in Israel and the conditions here in our day.

THEN A TIME OF TROUBLE

Divine disapproval of human hard-heartedness, selfishness and neglect of poorer brethren, and the forgetfulness of the fact that we are all children of one blood and amenable to the laws of the same Creator, brought upon the Israelites the divine chastisements, judgments. We believe that the Scriptures with equal clearness, tell of a great "time of trouble" now impending over the world, but especially over Christendom—a time particularly mentioned by Saint James, saying, "Go to now, ye rich men, weep and howl for the misery that shall come upon you."—James 5:1.

This trouble is mentioned in today's study, verse 9: "The Lord of Hosts said in my hearing, Of a truth many houses shall be desolate, even great and fair [houses and families], without inhabitant." If we rightly appreciate what the Scriptures foresaw respecting times not far ahead of us, we will see that many of the great and rich will be in a sad plight in their country-side homes, as will be some of the poorer in the congested cities, for the time of trouble, it is declared, will be upon all. The Prophet proceeds to indicate that shortage of crops will have much to do with the trouble: "Yea, ten acres of vineyard shall yield one bath, and the seed of an homer shall yield an ephah."

Never before has the world been so amply fortified against all peculiarities of conditions. Drouth and famine in one part may be relieved by the surplus of another part; nevertheless, we are to remember that the entire situation is in the divine hand, and that if a shortage of food supply should now come to pass it would indicate a divine intention in the matter, more than at any time in the world's history.

MUSIC, REVELRY, INTOXICATION

The text given us for today's lesson comes next in our study. It implies that in the days of Isaiah's prophecy many of the rich indulged themselves in intoxicating liquors, music, revelry, etc., to their own injury as well as to the neglect of their responsibilities to God. They asked, "Am I my brother's keeper?" even as Cain asked this question. By their accumulated wealth they had more than heart could wish, while others had insufficient and were needy. Their brilliancy of intellect and good fortune in life enabled them to triumph over the curse, which reads: "In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, until thou return unto the ground, for out of it wast thou taken."—Gen. 3:19.

But this victory gave them time, for which they were also responsible. Instead of using that time for the general blessing of their fellowmen, and their money for the general uplift of humanity, they accumulated houses and lands, etc., and drank constantly and excessively to their injury. Could they wonder that such a course would not have divine approval? Could they wonder that all these things would bring upon them some disaster?

And how about today? is it the same? We answer, Yes and No. With many it is the same exactly, but with a considerable number of the wealthy of our day it is very different, we are glad to say. Continually we have evidences of the noble rich, as well as of the noble poor. Continually we have evidences that some of the wealthy consider their possessions as a trust from the Almighty to be used in his service, to be used for the sake of humanity, for its uplift, its comfort. Nearly every quarter of Christendom can boast of some such characters, but alas, they are comparatively few. The majority of the rich, like the majority of the poor, are selfish to the core.

It is in this direction that we are to look for the danger which the Scriptures declare to be imminent. When the selfish rich and the selfish poor shall join issue in a great struggle, as the Bible clearly declares they will do, then the world will see the time of trouble prophesied—"such as never was since there was a nation"—a time of trouble which Jesus declares will never be again, because following that great trouble, upon the ashes of the present civilization, Immanuel, Messiah, the Son of the Highest, will establish the kingdom of God, the rule of righteousness under the whole heavens, for the blessing of all the families of the earth, the rich, the poor.

THE OPERATION OF GOD'S HANDS

God's complaint in verse 12 is that the rich in their feasting and music and selfish aggregation of wealth regarded not the work of the Lord, neither considered the operation of his hands. In applying this to our day, let it not be thought that we are objecting that the wealthy do not contribute sufficiently for the maintenance of the various denominations of Christendom.

The thought we gather is that God would have the prosperous people of our day take a broad view of his work, of humanity in general. He would have them concentrate their mental powers and force of character, not upon the personal aggregation of wealth, but upon generous schemes for the blessing and uplifting of the entire race. "The earth is the Lord's and the fulness thereof." "He hath given it to the children of men." Ultimately, according to the Scriptures, he intends that the world as a whole is to share, upon a basis of equality, all of earth's advantages.

Thus Socialism, according to the Bible, will be the ultimate condition of the earth in which all mankind will receive a blessing. Socialists, not aware of this teaching of God's Word, these promises of the future, or if aware of them doubting them, propose to take over in the interest of all mankind the great blessings which are now in the hands of the comparatively few. To us their schemes appear dangerous, impracticable. To us it appears, as the Scriptures indicate, that failing to accomplish their benevolent designs, Socialists will become bitter anarchists, and plunge themselves and the whole world into the most awful trouble ever known.

But what an opportunity is now slipping through the fingers of some of the very wealthy—an opportunity to join in with the noblest and best of the Socialists and help to lead the masses of the people, not toward anarchy, but away from it—toward the conditions which God's Word and the principles of justice and righteousness set before us as the proper conditions—the ideal conditions!

Among the many wealthy people of our day are some multi-millionaires, who could accomplish much for mankind, and who, indeed, have already accomplished much, and who have the wealth necessary and those hearts, we believe, are longing for an opportunity to do good; but doubtless the opportunity will pass unimproved; the time of trouble foretold will fall upon the race.

We must admit, in any event, that even if Socialism were established in the world it could not be maintained in any degree of perfection except by men thoroughly converted to God—men who would feel their responsibility to God and to men. In other words, what we need is the conversion of the world, not merely to an outward bowing of the knee, but to a heart-harmony with God and the principles of his righteousness.

Will this ever come? Ah, yes! The mouth of the Lord hath spoken it! But it cannot come through any power of ours. We can favor it, advocate it, and point toward it, but individually, those who love righteousness and who see the way of the Lord are so insignificant that they cannot accomplish what they would for their fellows. "Wait ye upon me, saith the Lord, until that day!" "For then will I turn to the people a pure language, that they may all call upon the name of the Lord, to serve him with one consent."—Zeph. 3:8, 9.

In his own time, following the great time of trouble, God will humble the world. Meantime the elect saints will be glorified, and with Messiah, as his bride, constitute the long-promised kingdom of God for the blessing of humanity. Then Satan shall be bound and all the good influences of righteousness and truth and knowledge shall be let loose for the blessing of the world.

"HELL HATH ENLARGED HERSELF"

The Lord tells us that because of these conditions his people are in captivity, not knowing how to help themselves, lacking knowledge, and their honorable men are famished, weak, perplexed, ignorant of the proper course; and the multitude who rely upon them are also thirsty. This is the famine elsewhere mentioned, not for bread, nor for water, but for a hearing of the message of the Lord, the Gospel of Messiah's kingdom, which is the very message that all need to hear.

On account of the same condition, "Hell hath enlarged herself and opened her mouth without measure; and their glory and their multitude and their pomp, and he that rejoiceth shall descend into it." Not the hell of eternal torment taught in our various creeds is here meant, but the Bible hell, the grave, the state of death. The time of trouble approaching will mean the loss of much life; as Jesus said, "Unless those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved."—Matt. 24:22.

THE WHITE STONE GIVEN THE OVERCOMERS

"To him that overcometh will I give . . . a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth save he that receiveth it."—Rev. 2:17.

In ancient times the Greeks and the Romans had a custom of noting and perpetuating friendship by means of a white stone. This stone was divided into halves, and each person inscribed his name on the flat surface, after which the parts of the stone were exchanged. The production of either half was sufficient to insure friendly aid, even from the descendants of those who first divided the stone. A similar custom was sometimes observed by a king, who would break a white stone into two parts, one of which he would retain and the other part give to a special ambassador. That part could be sent to the king at any time and would insure aid. Thus the divided stone became a mark of identification.

Rev. 2:17 seems to refer to this ancient custom. The white stone signifies a precious token of the Lord's love, and the new name written in the stone suggests the Bridegroom's name. The statement indicates a special acquaintance with the great King of kings' secret between himself and the individual. The overcomers are not to be recognized merely as a class—the bride class——but each will have the personal favor of the Lord. Of this no one will know save himself and the King. There is an individual and personal friendship between the Lord and the overcomers, who may be said to receive the mark of identification—the antitypical white stone—now, in this life.

This mark is the sealing of the holy Spirit by which the Lord identifies the overcomers. While this is said to be a part of the final reward of the church, yet from the very beginning of our experience we have this personal acquaintance with the Lord. The full seal of the holy Spirit will be given in the resurrection, when we receive the new body. Then we shall have the complete knowledge of the name by which we shall be known to the Lord and he to us forever.

"THE GOOD FIGHT OF FAITH"

I came and saw, and hoped to conquer,
As the great Roman once had done;
His was the one hour's torrent shock of battle,
My field was harder to be won.

I came and saw, but did not conquer,
The foes were fierce, their weapons strong;
I came and saw, but yet I did not conquer,
For me the fight was sore and long.

They said the war was brief and easy,
A word, a look, would crush the throng;
To some it may have been a moment's conflict,
To me it has been sore and long.

They said the threats were coward bluster,
To brave men they could work no wrong;
So some may boast of swift and easy battle,
To me it has been sore and long.

And yet I know that I shall conquer,
Though sore and hard the fight may be;
I know, I know I shall be more than victor
Through Him who won the fight for me.

I fight, not fearful of the issue,
My victory is sure and near;
Yet not the less with hand and eye all watchful,
Grasp I my buckler and my spear.

For I must fight, if I would conquer,
'Tis not by flight that fields are won;
And I must conquer, if I would inherit
The victor's joy and crown and throne.

Horatius Bonar

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SELF-ESTEEM'S ADVANTAGES AND DRAWBACKS

Whoever will carefully study the matter we believe will agree that a moderate amount of self-esteem is a great aid to success in the present life. It gives a self-confidence in respect to all of life's affairs, great and small. It impels its possessor to do and to dare to the full extent of his ability—if caution be lacking it may lead on to disastrous folly. But the lack of self-confidence, self-esteem, has held back thousands who otherwise might have been brilliant leaders in the path of progress.

Having pointed out some of the advantages of reasonable self-confidence we should point out some of the disadvantages of over-confidence—too great self-esteem. Its arrogance, its pride, its snobbishness, are disgusting and continually interfere with the progress of the unfortunate possessor. He never learns except by bitter experiences, because he always thinks he knows, and exposes his ignorance.

Some of the best people, the saintly, have small self-esteem, depreciate their own talents and exaggerate their own blemishes. Their humbleness of mind is a blessing when it leads them to God—to the throne of heavenly grace for forgiveness and for grace to help in every time of need. As between too much and too little self-esteem, therefore, our choice should be the latter.

"LET A MAN THINK SOBERLY"

Whether born with too much or with too little self-esteem, those who come into God's family are put into the school of Christ to be taught, corrected—made right, in harmony with divine standards. Those naturally self-conceited must learn meekness—by instructions if they will—otherwise by experiences. And they should learn to rejoice even in humiliating experiences. They are evidences that God's providence is supervising their affairs and preparing them for the kingdom; for without meekness and humility none will be fit for it.

As the self-conceited must learn humbly to trust God and not rely on themselves and thus secure balance, so the naturally self-depreciative must learn a lesson of confidence. Not selfconfidence, not self-reliance is the most desirable, but rather confidence in God and reliance upon His promised "grace to help in every time of need." This maintains the desirable humility and meekness, yet gives the courage and force suggested by the Apostle's words: "I can do all things through Christ, which strengtheneth me." (Phil. 4:13) As St. Paul again declares, "Our sufficiency is of God!"

Thus inspired by faith in God and in his promises those "taught of God" become marvelously "strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might." (Eph. 6:10) The righteous is strong as a lion, saying, "I will not fear what man may do unto me." (Psa. 118:6) I will not heed what man may say of me or do to me. So long as I have the Almighty Creator for my Father and the Redeemer for my elder Brother I shall be content, relying on their "exceeding great and precious promises."

Thus, whether by nature self-conceited or humble, God's Word and providences in Christ tend to bring all followers of Christ to oneness of heart and mind. The one is humbled,

the other exalted. Both learn not to trust in self or the arm of flesh, but in him who is able to do for them exceedingly, abundantly, more than they could ask or think, according to the riches of his grace in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Here note the Apostle's exhortation that a man "think of himself not more highly than he ought, but think soberly," according to the measure of God's grace bestowed on him. (Rom. 12:3) If any man has received none of God's grace, favor, mercy, forgiveness, surely it is not because he did not need it. Let him therefore feel his poverty without it. If any man has received much of God's grace it was because he needed it. He therefore may boast, but not of himself. His boast may well be in God who is thus working in him "to will and to do of his good pleasure."—Phil. 2:13.

LACK OF SELF-APPRECIATION

This deficiency operates in many ways not generally suspected. Many a man is a beggar or a thief simply because of a lack of self-appreciation. He thinks, I am nobody—and everybody knows it. He hangs his head in self-shame. He has a guilty look without having committed crime. He is treated according to his estimate of himself as expressed in his acts and looks, all of which reflect unconsciously his mental picture of himself.

When some, measuring him by his looks, declare: You are a mean man, a rascal, a thief, a scoundrel; I can see it—I can read you through and through! the effect is to thoroughly discourage him. Accepting the rating of his own brain and its reflection in the words of others he becomes rascal, scoundrel, thief. Few there are of benevolent heart to see the trouble of this class and sympathetically to give an encouraging word—to turn the scale and help bring forward the better qualities of the mind and heart.

It is here that the Gospel of Jesus does for such what nothing else could do. The Master's voice rings out in contrast with all other voices saying: Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden and discouraged; I will give you rest. Ye shall find rest unto your souls!

Ah, the change! The discouraged one says, Then I am not beyond hope; not so mean, not so degraded that Jesus would pass me by. The very suggestion inspires new hope. If followed, it leads on and on to the riches of God's grace provided in Christ for the penitent, the willing, the obedient.

By the time such a man receives the begetting of the holy Spirit and is able to cry, "Abba, Father!" old things pass away and all things become new. However, his fleshly weaknesses and unworthiness may still continually cry, You are unworthy; however, still in humility, he may acknowledge this with groans and tears, he is not cast down! He has God's assurance that he is a new creature in Christ, whose perfect spirit body awaits him in the first resurrection. He has the assurance that God knows of his fleshly weaknesses, and has made provision for his forgiveness through Christ, the Advocate. He has the assurance that it is not the flesh that God expects to perfect, but the new creature, the heart, the will. He has the assurance that he is a son of God and a joint-heir with Christ in His great Messianic kingdom, which soon is to bless the world. He has the assurance that all present trials of faith and patience and loyalty to God, to the truth and to the brethren are permitted to test his heart-loyalty, without which he could not be a joint-heir in Messiah's kingdom. These divine assurances make strong the weak and give courage not only in respect to the future life, but also in the affairs of the present. No wonder the Bible speaks of the followers of Christ as transformed and mind-renewed!—Rom. 12:2.

IN RESPECT TO PHYSICAL HEALTH

It may surprise some to learn that lack of self-confidence affects physical health as well as morals. Physiologists are agreed that the mind has much to do with the operation of all the human functions. The man deficient in self-esteem not only feels mean in respect to other affairs of life, but he lacks physical tone, snap, energy, so necessary to our best successes in any avenue of life. How hope, joy, peace, content can affect the liver, spleen and stomach none can explain; but the fact is conceded. How despair and hopelessness can and do affect not only the various functions of the brain but the heart, stomach, liver, gall, etc., we cannot explain; but the fact is conceded.

The person lacking self-esteem is disgusted with himself and ready to imagine any disease, and is proportionately predisposed to diseases.

Wisely, therefore, physicians and philosophers are advising people to hold up their heads; not to become discouraged; not to imagine every sensation a symptom of a dangerous disease. The salutary advice is good for such: to look on the brighter side of life; to think of being strong—to imagine themselves strong, healthy, happy, and to feel and to be as nearly perfect as their imperfect minds and bodies will permit. This anti-bilious view of life is sure to bring encouragement and blessing to some.

But nothing will so thoroughly offset the burdens of life as the grace of God. Whoever receives the "wedding garment" no longer is so overwhelmed by the appearance of the filthy rags of his own unrighteousness. Whoever realizes that as a son of God and follower of the Savior he is an ambassador for God has no time specially to pamper and coddle his flesh, nor to make its care his paramount thought. He must be about his Heavenly Father's business! He must make use of his ambassadorship! He must "show forth the praises of him who called us out of darkness into his marvelous light!"

The effect of these new ambitions, hopes, aims, upon his physical health is often marvelous. It serves as a spiritual nerve-tonic. It stimulates the mortal to service divine. The new mind does not suggest carelessness of the mortal body—nor yet carefulness, except to the extent that necessary care may obtain the larger results to God's glory from the consumption of the human energies. Hence, as St. Paul says, "Godliness is profitable unto all things, having the promise of the life that now is as well as of that which is to come."—1 Tim. 4:8.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF FAITH THROUGH FIERY TRIALS

"That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ."—1 Pet. 1:7.

Faith may be said to have in it the two elements of intellectual assurance and heart-reliance. Both the head and the heart—the intellect and the affections—are necessary to the faith without which it is impossible to please God. With some, faith is all emotion; with others, it is all intellectuality. But neither of these elements alone can withstand the fiery tests to which faith is subjected. Both must be present and remain, if our faith be that which will endure to the end and be found unto praise, honor and glory at the appearing of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

The trial of our faith to which our Lord and the apostles refer is a trial, not only of our intellectual knowledge of divine truth, but also of our heart-reliance upon God. In both respects, the true child of God will find himself severely tried. Let him see to it that he has a "Thus saith the Lord" for every item of his belief. Let him study the doctrine and get a clear understanding of every element of the truth. Let him become rooted, grounded, settled and established in the doctrines of God, and give earnest heed lest at any time he let them slip.—Heb. 2:1.

When he has his faith well grounded in the fundamental principles of divine truth, let every consecrated child of God see to it that he also continue to cultivate heart-reliance in the "great and precious promises." St. Peter tells us that a faith which has stood the tests of fiery ordeal and has come off victorious is very precious in the sight of the Heavenly Father. Whenever we pass through a fiery trial and still retain, not only our faith in the doctrines, but also our confidence in God, our reliance in his promises, our integrity of heart and purpose, and our zeal for truth and righteousness, then our characters have grown more Christ-like and hence more pleasing to God, who subjects us to discipline for this very purpose.

St. Peter intimates in our text that the faith of those called throughout the Gospel age will receive a severe testing. He says, "That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ." In the present time, when gold is comparatively a rare metal, it has a special value. Therefore, the Apostle compares it to the faith of the little flock, to whom alone, of all humanity, will be given the glory, honor and immortality promised to those who overcome.

Hence the trial of the faith of this class is very important. None will be admitted to membership in the body of Christ who has not been tested and proved by the Lord. But let us remember that our testing is not to see whether we are perfect according to the flesh. On the contrary, God knows our frame; he remembers that we are dust.—Psa. 103:14.

What God is seeking in us is the development and perfection of faith. We are tested to see whether we believe in him as a faithful, wise, loving and true God; and in his Son as our Redeemer, who purchased us with his own precious blood, and as our Advocate, who now covers our blemishes, past, present and future, with the robe of his imputed righteousness. These are the elements af faith which he will test thoroughly and which must grow stronger as time goes by. Without strong, well-tested faith in God and his promises, we cannot please him and become members of the elect class which he is now selecting.

THE PURPOSE FOR WHICH FAITH IS TRIED

The trial of our faith is not left to chance. It is supervised by our Lord Jesus Christ himself, who is represented by the Prophet Malachi as a refiner and purifier of gold and silver, that he may purify the antitypical House of Levi, and separate the dross from the precious metal. (Mal. 3:3) In one sense of the word, he came as that refiner at the first advent. During the entire Gospel age, he has been doing the refining work in his people, that the offering to the Father might be an acceptable one.

First of all, our Lord laid down his life in fulfilment of the types of the law, thus demonstrating his absolute trust, loyalty, and faith in God. The church of Christ must be similarly tested and proved in respect to their obedience, trust, loyalty to the Father. They must be willing, not only to trust God when things are favorable, but to trust in his providences when they cannot see the outcome. To attain this degree of faith, they must pass through manifold trials and testings, that they may demonstrate their faith and loyalty.

During the Gospel age a peculiar, special and called-out class is being dealt with. We can see that God it not dealing with the world, but allows it to "lie in the wicked one." (1 John 5:19, Diaglott) St. Paul tells us that during those times when the people were in ignorance, God paid no particular attention to their conduct except when it went to an extreme. (Acts 17:30) But during the next age, whoever does not repent when he hears the Gospel will make no advancement; but will, in conjunction with the divine plan, have punishments, stripes, for anything that he knowingly does that is wrong. This Gospel age, however, is for the development of a specially called-out class—a people for a purpose—the church of Christ.

The question naturally arises, Why should God test faith rather than works? The answer is that all kinds of works are dependent upon the ability of the worker, and that the whole race of Adam has become unable to do perfect works, on account of the fall of their first parents. None can be perfectly just, perfectly wise, perfectly loving; to be so in our present imperfect condition is impossible.

Therefore, in his wisdom and love, God avoids making his test along those lines in which we are absolutely incompetent, and makes it along the line of faith—in his wisdom, his love and his promises. To doubt any of these would be to weaken the basis of our hope. We realize that we are in a fallen condition, that we are dying like the remainder of the race. We have heard through the Word of God that he has provided a Savior, but we see that things continue much as they were, despite all that God and Christ have done. Our faith, however, assures us that God, who knows the end from the beginning, is working all things according to the counsel of his own will and that in due time he will establish righteousness in the earth.—Eph. 1:11; Psa. 72:1-7.

The language of one without faith would be, "I cannot see that God or Christ is accomplishing anything for the world. Man now learns to control himself better than did his ancestors and so he does not fight as did the savages of old, but uses more modern weapons. He builds hospitals and insane asylums; in this way he gets the sick and insane off his hands and so has more time to devote to business." Present conditions have a strong influence upon the world. Very much depends upon how we look at a matter.

TRUTH AND RIGHTEOUSNESS INTEGRAL PARTS OF CHARACTER

From the standpoint of faith we see that Christ has come into the world and during the Gospel age has been carrying on the work of selecting the Church, which is his body, and that from these a light has shone out into the surrounding darkness, which has been more or less dispelled by it. The light of the holy Spirit, shed abroad by the example of many Christian lives, exerts an influence today; and many have a veneer of politeness which may be mistaken for the fruits of the Spirit of God. But the outward conduct alone is not evidence of acceptable heart condition. God desires that truth and righteousness shall become integral parts of our characters and that the principle of Love shall dominate in everything. This development of character we do not find among all who profess the name of Christ.

Our faith, looking out into the world, asks of the Lord, "When will the promised time come in which Thy will shall be done on earth as in heaven?" The Scriptures reply that the glorious time for the blessing of the world will not come until the church shall have passed into glory; that Messiah will then reign for a thousand years in order to put down sin and opposition to divine arrangements and to uplift those who desire to come into harmony with God; and that in order to accomplish this work he will establish a government based upon the principles of righteousness. By faith we accept this answer, and await God's due time for the blessing of all mankind.

Meantime, we will not permit ourselves to drift into unbelief while we delude ourselves with the thought that we or others are accomplishing something through "social uplift." We are glad to see efforts put forth to help the unfortunate; but we perceive that there is a force at work in the world that prevents success along this line. Present methods will not eradicate selfishness from the human heart; and until this is accomplished, God's will cannot be done on earth as it is in Heaven.

To bring about this desired result, the kingdom of heaven is soon to be established, according to the Word of God. If, while waiting for his due time to arrive, we participate in worldly ambitions and endeavors, our faith will become vague and perhaps die. Although the good that we may do will be in conflict with the darkness around us, nevertheless, it should always be shining forth in our words and in our conduct as the result of the glorious hopes that inspire our lives.

Faith is a quality possessed by all whom God is calling to membership in the body of Christ, and the appeal of the Scriptures is only to those who have some faith and who are determined to increase it. When we begin our course as Christians, we have comparatively little faith, and it must be developed; our Christian experience is for the purpose of faith development. As St. Peter suggests, our faith, which is on trial, is much mor precious than gold, although the gold be tried by fire. The exercise of faith tends to its development, and so our Father gives us numerous trials to test its strength.

THE FAITH OF THE ANGELS SEVERELY TESTED

God purposely permits us to be subject to manifold temptations for the testing of our faith, which is necessary because of the outcome of the trial. We may suppose that prior to the existence of man the angels had no such trials of faith and patience as the church has had, for the angels saw God and knew of His works. Nevertheless, God has been pleased to give them a test of faith, which has continued during all of man's experience.

The primary cause of Satan's deflection, which resulted in his rebellion, was that he lost his faith in God. He formed the idea that he could manage the Universe better than could the Almighty, and thought to secure to himself a little corner where he could show how affairs should be carried on. He succeeded in getting control of our first parents, only to find that, instead of bringing a blessing, he had brought upon the human family the curse of death—the penalty of sin—and all the misery and crime now on the pages of history.

Satan's career became a very important test to the angels. Believing that God had all power, they did not understand why he should permit Satan to pursue so evil a course. They would have restrained the adversary altogether. So when they saw evil going on unrestrained for centuries, some of them evidently lost their faith. Thus came about the conditions mentioned in the sixth chapter of Genesis, when some of the angels preferred to materialize and live in human conditions. This was in violation of the divine arrangement, and was the result of their loss of faith in God's wisdom and power. They had seen what Satan had done, although he had not succeeded in doing anything great; and their sentiment was, "Apparently God does not control affairs so completely as we have thought."—Gen. 6:1-4; 2 Pet. 2:4, 5; Jude 6, 7.

Thus we see that God tested the faith of the holy angels,

especially when we understand that the evil conditions prevailing before the flood have continued to some extent. The holy angels had occasion to doubt, to fear respecting God's wisdom, love and power. Thus they were all thoroughly tested—more so than humanity; for they saw all that there was to be seen. We admit that there are a great many things that we do not know and cannot see, but the angels have apparently a much wider scope of knowledge. Thus the test of their faith was much greater than is ours.

God tested the faith of the angels because he wished to know which of them had that absolute confidence which would enable them to trust him, whether it seemed that he had or had not the power to control affairs. The lesson of the exceeding sinfulness of sin was both wise and necessary. Had the fall of man resulted in the everlasting torture of even a small proportion of the human family, we could not think that God was either wise or just in permitting this test to come upon his creatures.

For more than four thousand years God permitted mankind to go down into death. Then came a manifestation of his love when he provided for their redemption; and a still further manifestation of his power will be given in the next age, when they will be raised from the dead. Furthermore, in the bride class he is making a special illustration, both to angels and to men, of his love for those who manifest heart-loyalty to him, and of his willingness to lift those faithful few far above the angels and even to make them "partakers of the divine nature." We see, then, that in God's dealings with the angels he had respect to their faith.

FAITH PROPORTIONATE TO KNOWLEDGE OF GOD'S CHARACTER

The Scriptures say that "without faith it is impossible to please God." (Heb. 11:6) If one lose his faith there is no telling whither he may wander. The Apostle Peter's argument is that this special class who are being selected for exaltation to the divine nature, must expect to have their faith tested, and that this testing is most important from the divine point of view. If they have faith, it will control all of their affairs.—Compare Heb. 11:1, 6.

Our faith will be in proportion to our knowledge of the character of God. We shall find, upon observation, that in proportion to our faith we can endure hardness as good soldiers of Jesus Christ. Since our test is for so brief a time—a few years—it must of necessity be a very severe, a crucial one. God is subjecting our faith to a great heat in order to separate the dross. If we had not the faith, we might fear to take the steps which would bring us into this crucial position. Fear would lead us to decline to take the course that God indicates to be his will. Without faith we would shrink from the fiery trials, the heated furnace. If we have not the faith to stand the trials, then we are not of the kind whom God is at the present time looking.

If we appreciate this matter, we shall see that "without faith it is impossible to please God;" and that confidence in him will lead us to weigh his words of precious promise. These promises will make clear to us the reason why these testings are upon us, and will enable us to appreciate our testings as marks of his love for us. The Lord would have us be "a peculiar people," tried and tested, "zealous of good works," a people for a purpose; and so he develops us through suffering.

When the world is on trial during the Millennial age, knowledge will have come in, and there will be less opportunity for the exercise of faith. Mankind will be in much the same condition as that in which the angels now are. For a thousand years, the world will be assisted upward, and at the same time they will have opportunities of cultivating faith—heart-reliance—in God. What we now see by faith, they will actually know—that the permission of sin has been working out a great divine test for both men and angels. Thus gradually, throughout the thousand years, their faith will be established in practically the same way that the faith of the angels is now being established. They will see and will walk by sight, while we believe the promises and walk by faith.

There is a difference between intellectual belief and heart-reliance. The person who knows God best will trust him most. Our Lord Jesus in his glorified position trusts the Father most perfectly at all times. But with us, whose trust is imperfect, it is different. Not until the first resurrection shall we have perfect trust. The greater the knowledge of God's character, the greater will be the heart-reliance upon him.

During the Millennium, as intellectual belief gives place to knowledge, the heart reliance of those who are loyal to the principles of righteousness will increase proportionately. It will always be in order to trust in God. The Great Creator is the Great Upholder of the Universe; and all of his creatures will ever be recipients of his bounty. If we understand the Scriptures, the only ones who will have deathlessness will be the Lord Jesus and the church, which is his body. (1 Cor. 15:53) All others will have dependent lives, and so will be objects of divine care. In order to have everlasting life, they will need to have a heart-reliance upon their Creator. The more they learn of the unchangeableness of the divine promises and character, the greater will be their trust.

The faith of the church will be of a higher character than is that of the angels or than will be that of the world restored. The faith of the church will have been wrought out amidst the darkness and obscurity of this age, which are being permitted for the very purpose of developing that faith; for the church is called to occupy a place much higher than that of angels or men—called to be partakers of the divine nature.—2 Pet. 1:3, 4.

When, during the Millennial age, the world shall have learned their lessons along the lines of knowledge, God does not purpose to receive them everlastingly without a thorough test of their heart-reliance. In Rev. 20:3, 7-10, we read that at the close of the thousand years, Satan shall be loosed for a little season. Mankind will then know what is right and what is wrong, for the principles of righteousness will have been implanted in their hearts. The experience with Satan will be a test of heart-reliance, of loyalty, in that God will apparently not be in control.

Then all those not in the fullest sympathy with God and his divine plan will be misled by this test of faith. Thus they will demonstrate their true character. Those who prove disobedient will be destroyed in the second death. God tells us that in the consummation every knee shall bow and every tongue confess to the glory of his Name, and that every creature in heaven and in earth shall give honor and praise to the Son.—Rev. 5:13.

PERSECUTION AND FIERY TRIALS THE CHRISTIAN'S EXPERIENCE

"All that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution."—2 Tim. 3:12.

Godliness implies a character which is actuated by principles of righteousness. In all our dealings we are either just or unjust, kind or unkind, not according to what some people may think of us, but according to the standard of righteousness found in the Scriptures. Therefore, in order to develop that character which is pleasing to God, we should in every detail of life consider carefully what is right and what is wrong, according to that standard. This course is Scripturally termed meditating in God's law. When we reach that development of character in which thought, word and deed are measured by the principles of righteousness, we shall have attained godlikeness.—Psa. 119:97.

What the Lord desires to see in his people is not merely an outward manifestation of devotion to him and to his brethren, but a development of love in our hearts and our dispositions. If we profess to love one another and yet pursue a course of self-seeking, wherein do we manifest love? So St. John admonishes to love not in word only, but in deed and in truth.—1 John 3:18.

Primarily, the godly are those who are in Christ Jesus, members of his mystical body, having presented their human bodies living sacrifices, holy and acceptable to God through the merit of the great Advocate. Secondly, the term godly includes those who live righteously, in sympathy with Christ Jesus, even though they may not live up to the full standard which the Lord has set, because they shrink from the suffering that results from godly living. Thirdly, the term godly includes some in the remote past, who, believing in the promise of the Lord that the "Seed" shall some day come, separated themselves from the rest of the world and, having obtained new aims, new ideas, were out of touch with the remainder of the race because of having a different standard.—Heb. 11: 13-16.

The ancient worthies composed this third class, who had a share in the suffering of the godly and a participation also in the blessing. Moses, for example, preferred to suffer affliction with the people of God, rather than to participate in the honors of the Egyptian Government. Although adopted

into the family of Pharoah, he had respect to the promise that the Messiah would come. Hence he suffered on account of his faith in the promise. So all the patriarchs desired to be in harmony with God, in accordance with His promise made to Abraham, and because of belief in that promise they suffered more or less persecution.—Heb. 11:24-26; 36-38.

Some one may ask, "Why should the godly suffer?" The Bible answers that sin has brought the world into opposition with God. Whoever, then, would have all men speak in commendation of him would not be in harmony with the divine arrangement, for the masses of the world are pursuing a course that the Lord does not approve. We are not saying that everything which the world does is sinful, but that the standards of God are so high that because of their fallen condition the masses of the world are not subject to the law of God, neither, indeed, can they be, for they are carnal, sold under sin. (Rom. 8:7; 7:14, 15) Those who wish to have influence with the world must cater to popular prejudices. On the contrary, those who would be God's people must be loyal to the principles of righteousness and consequently must go in the opposite direction to that of the world. Hence they are opposed by the world.

From the standpoint of God the course of the world is sinful. There is a tendency in our flesh to go with the world, who are laboring under false views of various kinds, because that course is in sympathy with the desires of our own fallen flesh. Hence to live godly is to live in opposition to the course of the world and of our own flesh. This would include not only living uprightly and avoiding sin, etc., but also the making of sacrifices as well, where principles are not involved. We are to beware, however, lest we be deceived along this line. Not only are we contending with the world, but we are wrestling with wicked spirits in high positions.—Eph. 6:12.

ILLUSTRATION OF SATAN'S DEVICES

Sometimes Satan's arts seem to be employed to get those who are trying to live godly into contention with each other. One of his devices is to make unimportant things seem important, and in this way to make people think that they are contending for righteousness' sake, and that the sufferings that they bring on themselves in this manner are for righteousness' sake. Another device is to deceive people into "busy-bodying in other men's matters."—1 Peter 4:15.

Our influence upon each other should be uplifting; we should not cause others to grieve, except where suffering is absolutely necessary. Hence the Lord's people should cultivate the fruits of the Spirit increasingly—meekness, gentleness, patience, brotherly kindness, love. The cultivation of these fruits of the Spirit is a law in respect to the Lord's people. All who would live godly in Christ Jesus are to see to it that they are not the cause of suffering to others—especially to those of the household of faith.

SUFFERING AS A CHRISTIAN

While it is true that all who will live godly in this world will suffer to the extent to which they are out of harmony with the present evil conditions, yet the promised blessings of the Scriptures are to those who live godly in Jesus Christ, those who are Christians. Of these St. Peter says, "If any man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed.—1 Peter 4:16.

A Christian is a follower of Christ, one who has cast in his lot to suffer with Christ, that he may be also glorified with the Lord. (2 Tim. 2:12) From the Apostle's standpoint, therefore, no one could suffer as a Christian unless he had become a Christian.

Every painful experience which our Lord had was suffering for righteousness' sake—not only the great sufferings, not only the great fight against sin, but also all the little, unpleasant experiences common to the world. Being "holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners" (Heb. 7:26), there was no reason why he should suffer. We do not understand that the Heavenly Father has provided sufferings, trials and difficulties for the angels who are in harmony with him. Nor do we think that Jesus, being a Son in full accord with the Father, would have suffered were it not for his covenant of self-sacrifice. All of his sufferings were because He had come into the world to be man's Redeemer. They were all parts of his necessary experience.

The sufferings which our Lord endured were the result of his activity in the service of the Father. These were his weariness, his weakness after giving out his vitality to heal others, his bloody sweat, his ignominious buffetings, and all the reproaches, the sneers and the bitter words incurred on account of his faithfulness, to all of which he meekly and quietly submitted until his suffering on Calvary terminated his human existence.

SUFFERINGS RESULTING FROM HEREDITY, NOT SUFFERINGS OF CHRIST

There is no question that suffering in general is not suffering with Christ, but with Adam. Our physical infirmities which are of heredity, are not sufferings of Christ. Rather we should speak of the sufferings of Christ as being voluntary and not involuntary. When the Apostle says that if we suffer with the Lord we shall also reign with him (2 Tim. 2:12), he means the suffering which we bring on ourselves through faithfulness to our covenant. St. Paul speaks of filling up that which is behind the afflictions of Christ for his body's sake, which is the church. (Col. 1:24) These experiences are not for Adam's sake.

In St. Paul's own case he had, we believe, weak eyes as a result of his wrong course in persecuting the church; and that wrong course was, no doubt, largely the result of heredity. When the Apostle speaks of the sufferings he endured on account of his eyes, he does not speak of them as the sufferings of Christ, but says that his affliction was a messenger of Satan to buffet him. (2 Cor. 12:7) We might then say that all physical sufferings resulting from heredity are ministers of Satan opposing us, causing us much difficulty. However, we believe that the Lord is pleased with us if we resist these ministers of Satan.

If we should think of all our physical pains and aches as sufferings for Christ, then we should be obliged to think of our mental defects also as sufferings for Christ. For instance, a man who had a disabled hand might have a comparatively even temper; another might have a perverse temper, leading him into trouble, leading him to busybody in other men's affairs, etc. Thus his disposition causes him to suffer as a busybody and not for Christ. Paul tells us that our defects in character are works of the fallen flesh. (Gal. 5:19-21) If the sufferings that come to us because of imperfect mental conditions are sufferings of heredity, the physical sufferings which result from imperfect physical conditions, cannot be counted as sufferings for Christ.

In the case of a Christian, inherited weaknesses and those brought upon himself by the violation of the laws of God previous to his entrance into the family of God as a son, while not sufferings with Christ, will be made advantageous to him. These weaknesses our Father sees fit to leave with us, but assures us that his grace will be sufficient for us. (2 Cor. 12:9) While the realization of such care for our interests is humiliating in that it forces conviction of our weakness, yet it is refreshing and inspiring in that it proves our Father's love for us. "The Father himself loveth you."—John 16:27.

SUFFERING TURNED TO THE ADVANTAGE OF THE NEW CREATURE

But when one has undertaken to follow in the footsteps of Christ and has been begotten as a new creature, whatever affliction that new creature undergoes because of following the Lord, is suffering as a Christian; and whatever our experiences in suffering may be, these are not necessarily the portion of the sons of God, for the angels do not suffer; but he permits the church to have them in order to develop and crystallize character. If we rejoice that we are found worthy to share in the sufferings of the present time, every trial will be turned to advantage as a part of our Christian experience. "They are not of the world." (John 17:16) Therefore all of our experiences must be regarded as Christian, for correction in righteousness and for educational purposes.

But this is taking a broader, deeper view than ordinary. Certainly a Christian is not ashamed of what he may suffer because of his loyalty to the Lord, to the truth and to the brethren. In these sufferings he is to glorify God and to be thankful for them. He is to be glad for the opportunity of enduring something, to show not only the Lord, but himself also that he has endured something for Christ's sake. Every sacrifice that we make is for the purpose of suffering as a Christian, and we are not to be ashamed so to suffer.—1 Peter 4:16.

SUFFERING FOR CONSCIENCE NOT ALWAYS SUFFERING FOR CHRIST

There are others who suffer more or less as Christians suffer, but they are suffering from a worldly standpoint. People sometimes say, "This worldly man has his trials and sufferings, and shows such patience, such resignation, that surely he is suffering as a Christian." But we do not understand that anyone can suffer as a Christian unless he takes the steps necessary to make him a Christian. We are to view matters from God's standpoint. Doubtless many have suffered as Christians from a human viewpoint who were not Christians. In the dark ages many were put to death for the sake of principle. In our own day there are people who

give no evidence of being Christians, but who would rather die than have the Bible taken out of the public schools. Although they do not understand the Bible, yet if these were times of persecution, many would die at the stake in order to keep the Bible in the public schools.

We cannot always tell whether suffering is for Christ's sake. But where people have suffered for conscience' sake, they have thus cultivated character, and will get a blessing in the next age for that suffering. At present there is only the one door into membership in the body of Christ—obedience even unto death. Suffering with Christ, as we have seen, is not the ordinary suffering common to all in the fallen state, but only such experiences as are the result, more directly, of following Christ's example in advocating unpopular truths and in exposing popular errors. Such were the causes of the sufferings of Christ; and such will be the causes of suffering, persecution and loss to all who follow in his footsteps. Such will have fellowship in his sufferings now, and in the end will be counted worthy to share in the reward given for faithfulness to principle.

Throughout the Gospel age this course has meant self-sacrificing labor and endurance of reproach in the sowing and watering of Christ's doctrines. Now, in the end of the age, it means a similar fidelity and endurance in the harvest work now in progress—faithfulness even to the laying down of life itself, whether it be required by the gradual process of working it out in the Master's service, a dying daily, or by being brought more abruptly to a martyr's death.

SHRINKING BACK FROM SUFFERING

Our Lord forewarns us that in the end of the Gospel age, many who have a love for Christ will allow their love to grow cold because of the iniquity and sin in the world. (Matt. 24:12) It will be a test for such to decide whether they will partake of the worldly spirit. We see this test in operation now. A great many people who name the name of Christ, who really love the Lord, who appreciate much of his character, who would like to see the right prosper, nevertheless have no thought of making a spectacle of themselves before men. They would like to do right, to walk honorably, and to have the favor of men as good citizens. But as to being warm and faithful followers of the Lord—through "evil report and good report" (2 Cor. 6:8)—their faith and zeal are not sufficient to endure the test.

The Lord Jesus gives us the invitation to become joint-heirs with him. He has very clearly informed us that to follow in his steps will mean trials and difficulties in the flesh. He says, "In the world ye shall have tribulation." (John 16:33) St. Paul repeats the sentiment, saying, "We must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God"; and again in our text he emphasizes the thought, saying, "Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution." (Acts 14:22; 2 Tim. 3:12) There is no other way to enter the kingdom than by self-sacrifice, deadening of the flesh, mortifying it. In proportion as the new creature grows, the old creature perishes, until the sacrifice shall have been completed in death.

The Lord's people should thoroughly understand the terms and conditions upon which they have been called. They should therefore not think it strange when trials come upon them, no matter how fiery, no matter how severe. The Apostle Peter lovingly counsels the church: "Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you; but rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy. If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye; for the spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you; on their part he is evil spoken of, but on your part he is glorified." (1 Peter 4:12-14) The Lord is to be not only the Instructor, but also the Refiner to purge out the dross, that we may be made ready to share with Christ in the kingdom of "glory, honor and immortality."—Rom. 2:7.

TRIALS FROM FALSE BRETHREN

The Scriptures plainly teach that special trials may be expected in the church, amongst the brethren. And we find it to be true that our severest trials come not from without, but, as the Apostle in substance says, "From among yourselves shall arise false brethren," to injure the flock in general through personal ambition. (Acts 20:30) This becomes a test not only to the church, but to all those who are in contact with us, for if one member suffer, all the members suffer with it.—1 Cor. 12:26.

We are not, therefore, to think it strange if there are trials and difficulties, and if more or less dispute arise in the church. We are to cultivate gentleness, meekness, patience, loving-kindness toward all. Nevertheless, if a dispute arise amongst the Lord's people, we are to recognize that such things are unavoidable amongst those who have the truth. Our heads are imperfect, and consequently it requires some time to come into line with the teachings of the Lord's Word. Even disputation makes life an activity, and is better than a dead condition—not to care what is spoken or not spoken. Nevertheless, those who have zeal should be careful that they manifest the Spirit of the Lord, as above indicated—gentleness, patience, meekness, brotherly kindness, love, humility.

Think it not strange that there are fiery trials amongst yourselves, arising from one cause or another, that will make it particularly severe for you. Those among whom you are thrown in contact will cause you suffering, because of your zeal and their misunderstanding, their imperfection, etc. All of these fiery trials will work out good for you. It is far better to be amongst those who are fervent in spirit than to take a place amongst those who are lukewarm and thus lose the privilege of being one of those who are footstep followers of Christ. Perhaps those who are lukewarm will, in the time of trouble, learn a lesson. But the little flock are to learn their lesson in the present time—allowing the experiences of life to work out for them a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.—2 Cor. 4:17.

Our knowledge of God is limited; yet it is only what we should expect of the Heavenly Father, that any whom he accepts as his children will have divine love and care in the supervision of their affairs, which will make all things work for good to them. Since the Lord is our Shepherd, no one is able to pluck us out of his hands. (John 10:28, 29) We are as dear to him as the apple of his eye. He that began a good work in us is able to complete it in the day of Jesus Christ. (Phil. 1:6) So the more faith we have the more we appreciate the text, "We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them that are the called according to his purpose." (Rom. 8:28) This includes even the things that seem to be very contrary, very evil, very disadvantageous.

Our Lord said, "And this is life eternal, that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou has sent." (John 17:3) To know the Father means to be in fellowship with him, to have an intimate acquaintance with him. Experience corroborates this fact. The more obedient we are as children the more intimate is our acquaintance with him. And if we are unfaithful, even for a little space, we shall fail to make development along spiritual lines. But in proportion as we are seeking to walk in his ways, we become intimate with him in the particular sense in which a child knows his father. This knowledge gives us the trust that he cares for us as his children, and makes all things work together for good to us.—Rom. 8:28; 1 John 1:6, 7.

CO-OPERATION WITH GOD TO THE BEST OF OUR ABILITY

We note, however, that St. Paul says that all things work together for good, not for best. God has something to do in the way of his choice of his reward and of our possibilities. The angels of God, however, obedient to him, could not become archangels nor cherubim. Their obedience brings their highest welfare on their own plane. So with us. We cannot get the best for the reason that he has already given it to Jesus Christ, whom he has set next to himself at his right hand in power and glory and honor.—1 Peter 3:22.

Again, this promise is not a guarantee that all things in life will work together for the very best to us as though we had neither will nor choice in the matter. We should not say, "I positively resign myself; the Lord has said that all things will work together for the best, and if I miss opportunities in the service I shall say, 'Oh, well, it is all for the best.'" Thus to think would be a mistake, for it is evidently not at all the thought.

After we have become new creatures in Christ and children of God, he leaves us with a certain amount of choice. It is very largely in our own control what we shall do, whether we shall make progress or stand still or go backward. We cannot say that if one had lost the high calling his experiences would be the very best possible; and that if he went into the second death, his fate was the best. But we can say that this Scripture means that God stands ready to give us the best that he may have under the terms and conditions of the covenant which he has made with us.

Ours is a covenant of sacrifice. There are certain laws and principles which are not to be broken. Along these lines the Lord Jesus tells us that the Father will appoint those next to the Lord who have demonstrated most of the Spirit of the Redeemer. He will not put anyone in such a position or into the kingdom arbitrarily. His character, his words,

stand pledged that he will make the best of us that he is able to do, while at the same time recognizing our wills as paramount.

Jehovah does not seek those as his children who need to be forced. Our Lord said that the Father seeketh such to worship him as worship him in spirit and in truth. (John 4:23) We are to work to the best of our ability. But with all of our stumbling the Lord stands pledged that he will not leave us if we are faithful, and that he will make even our stumbling work out for good to us. Those who lose the crown may come up through great tribulation with the great company class. This is the best thing possible for them under the divine arangement. For those who go into the second death, their fate will not be the best for them; but it will be best for the entire universe that those should be blotted out of existence who are out of harmony with righteousness.

SPARED IN THE DAY OF TROUBLE

"They shall be mine, saith the Lord of Hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels; and I will spare them as a man spareth his only son that serveth him."—Mal. 3:17.

Like many other prophecies, the words of the Prophet Malachi seem to have a general application throughout the Gospel age and a particular one at the close of the age. Eighteen hundred years ago the Lord Jehovah began to make up his jewels. The first of these jewels was our Lord Jesus Christ, who was polished, perfected and taken up on high. Jehovah did not cease his work with the perfection of his Son, our Lord. He has arranged that other jewels be cut and polished after the similitude of his Son, that they may shine with him in the heavenly glory and kingdom; as it is written, "We are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works."—Eph. 2:10.

These gems must all be found by God, who is making up these jewels. But having been found of him, they are placed in the hands of the great Lapidarist, our Lord Jesus, that he may cut, polish and fit them for the glorious work of shining with him in the kingdom. Our Heavenly Father has appointed our Lord to be the great Master Workman in the preparation of the jewels.

In our text, the Lord Jehovah says that in that day of preparation of the jewels he will spare this class as a man spares his only son that serves him. He has not spared this class in the sense of relieving them from all suffering, for if they were thus spared they could not share the glory to follow this trial time. He did not spare Jesus, the head over the church, which is his body. But he will not permit them to be tempted above what they are able to bear. (1 Cor. 10:13) He has an interest in them and a sympathy for them, and delivers them from those things which would prove too weighty for them.

THE MOUNTING OF THE JEWELS GOING ON

In a certain sense, then, God has been making up his jewels for more than eighteen hundred years—in the sense of preparing them. But there is still a final gathering, or assembling, of this class, which has not yet been completed. The gathering of these jewels must include the resurrection, not merely of those who have been sleeping as members of the body of Christ, but also of those who are alive and remain to the end of the age. These all experience a change from animal to spirit conditions—"changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye." (1 Cor. 15:51, 52) In the assembling of this class—the mounting of the jewels, as it were—the Lord will show his own workmanship, what he has selected out of the filth and mire of the sinful race of mankind, and what he has made of them.

This gathering of the jewels is that to which the Prophet Malachi refers in the following quotation: "Behold, I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me; and the Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple, even the Messenger of the Covenant, whom ye delight in; behold, he shall come, saith the Lord of Hosts. But who may abide the day of his coming? and who shall stand when he appeareth? for he is like a refiner's fire, and like fullers' soap; and he shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver; and he shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness."—Mal. 3:1-3.

The Messenger of the Covenant is, primarily, our Lord Jesus, who came more than eighteen hundred years ago and presented himself to those who were heirs of the New Covenant—the Jews. The Apostle points out that this new arrangement meant, not only a new Mediator for them, but also better sacrifices and a new priesthood, who would be able to effect a satisfaction for the sins of the people, so that it would not be necessary to render the typical sacrifices thereafter year by year.—Heb. 9:11-15.

This Messenger of the Covenant came unto his own, but his own received him not. "But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God"—to become associated with himself, to become identified with himself, as members of his body. They are begotten to a new nature, not of the will of the flesh, but only of God.—John 1:11-13.

THE LORD'S WORDS A REFINING FIRE

In this sense of the word, our Lord sat as a refiner of gold and silver—discriminating, purifying. The words which he spoke were not only words of grace, of eternal life, but also words of purification, likened elsewhere to a sharp, two-edged sword. (Heb. 4:12) The Prophet Malachi compares them to fullers' soap, which would take out all stains and leave the garment pure and white; and he also says that our Lord will sit as a refiner of gold and silver, that the Levite class may offer to the Lord an acceptable sacrifice.

This prophecy refers, as we see, to the antitypical priesthood and includes both the royal priests and the great company. The work of this great Refiner is to purify the members of the church class—not only the little flock, but the great company as well.

This refining process takes place all through the Gospel age. As the individual members of the body of Christ grow in grace, they are put through not only the preliminary processes of the refining, but also the more trying ones. Gold represents the divine or higher order of spirit nature, and silver, the lower order. The gold represents the little flock, and the silver the great company.

None of these would be able to make an acceptable sacrifice of himself; but the great Advocate imputes His merit to each who offers himself in sacrifice and thus enables him to become such. The Father permits the Advocate to make of these acceptable sacrifices. They are his sacrifices, not their own. Then they are begotten to the new nature and adopted into the body of Christ. By this offering, our Lord, as the great Mediator, is getting ready for the institution of the New Covenant.

THE PRESENT A WONDERFUL TIME

The closing scenes of the Gospel age will be the most remarkable of the world's history. The church will then be completed. We are not at liberty to guess when the end of the trouble will be. Whether all of the trouble will come in the next two or three years we do not know. But we think that the most serious part of the trouble will occupy a very short time.

Let us remember that we are living in most wonderful times. More can be accomplished in one month now than could have been done in years some time ago—more in one hour than in days formerly. We are still in the waiting attitude, so that the Lord can indicate his will in the matter to us. We believe that the year 1915 will be even more wonderful than the present. We fully believe that the year 1914 will see the end of the Gentile Times, for we cannot find even one flaw in our Bible chronology. But we do not claim infallibility. To err is human. If, therefore, the Father permits us to blunder in respect to his Word in this matter, nevertheless, he will undoubtedly have a great blessing for us. And if it should be that the year 1914 should not mark the close of the Gentile Times, we would still believe that the time could not be very far distant; for the nearer we come to that time, the nearer we see the fulfilment of the things which the Scriptures indicate will then occur.

There is never a sin or a sorrow,
  There is never a care or a loss,
But that we may carry to Jesus,
  And leave at the foot of the cross.

Our Savior, our Friend and Redeemer,
  Our portion on earth and in heaven;
For he who withheld not his own Son,
  Hath with him all things freely given.

THE GREAT QUESTION

MARK 8:27-9:1.—NOVEMBER 17.

"Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God."—Matt. 16:16.

For a considerable period of his ministry our Lord did not declare himself, even to his disciples, to be the Messiah. Undoubtedly he chose the wiser course. As the Great Teacher he instructed the people, until they said, "Never man spake like this man"; he healed the people, until they said, "Could Messiah do more than this?" It was better, undoubtedly, that the thought should gradually come upon the minds of his followers than that he should have started in with making that claim—better that the people should claim it for him than that he claim the honor for himself.

He did, however, wish his disciples to know, and he approached the question by asking, "Who do men say that I am?" He got a reply, that some thought him John the Baptist risen from the dead; that others considered him to be Elijah risen from the dead, and others thought of him as being perhaps one of the other prophets.

Then came the point of the question: "But who say ye that I am?" St. Peter answered and said, "Thou art The Christ, the Son of the Living God." Jesus admitted the correctness of this, saying, "Blessed art thou, Simon, son of Jonah, for flesh and blood hath not revealed this unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven."

Forthwith Jesus began to explain to the beloved twelve the experiences that lay before him—how the kingdom would be formerly proffered to the Jews, and how through their representatives, the elders, the chief priests, they would reject him; how he would be killed, and after three days rise again.

He made the statement about his death very emphatic, and the disciples clearly understood it. Judas, angrily disappointed, considered it a disgrace upon our Lord for him to take such a view of the future, and a disgrace also upon the Apostles, because if Jesus had such expectations it would modify and regulate his course, and soon disaster would come to him, and the dashing of all their hopes which he had inculcated—hopes of sitting with him in his throne, etc.

Doubtless all of the Apostles were disappointed, but only St. Peter had the courage to express himself, saying, "Be it far from thee, Lord; this shall not happen." You will, we all know, as the Messiah, attain the throne of Israel and thus eventually the throne of the world, and bring blessing to the whole human race; and as you have promised, we shall be with you in your throne.

"GET THEE BEHIND ME, SATAN!"

In this course St. Peter was opposing the divine will and plan, of which the death of Jesus was the very center or hub, from which would radiate all the fulfilments of all the various promises—to the church first, to Israel next, and finally to all nations, peoples, kindreds and tongues. Jesus perceived that these influences were striving to hinder his consummation of his sacrifice, even as Satan tried to do in the beginning of his consecration.

To make the matter very emphatic he said to St. Peter, "Get thee behind me, adversary," thy words savor not of the things of God's plan, but of the things of human judgment and preference. Then he began to make clear to his followers what had not been "meat in due season" to give them before, in such plain terms, namely, that whoever desired to be counted in with him in any part of his work must realize that it would cost him all that he possessed of an earthly kind; he must deny himself, take up his cross and follow in the footsteps of the Redeemer.

Anyone solicitous of maintaining his rights and holding on to the present life, and unwilling to sacrifice all, will lose the great "prize" of the divine nature, which will be given to those who do take up the cross and make a full sacrifice of earthly interests. And on the other hand, he who will faithfully lose his life for Jesus' sake will save it—will gain the reward of life on the spirit plane.

Moreover, the same principle that now thus operates will always operate, namely, that whoever is simply selfish, loving his own life and his own interests, will not be accounted worthy of everlasting life, but those who will sacrifice, if need be, in the interests of the Lord's cause will be the ones accounted worthy in character for eternal life.

"WHAT SHALL IT PROFIT A MAN?"

God has provided a future life for every soul of man through the redemption accomplished by Jesus, but only the noble of heart, of character, of life, who will accept this great blessing through the divinely appointed way will get it. If they selfishly seek for the whole world, the selfishness thus developed will make them unfit for the eternal life. For what would a man take in exchange for the loss of his life? Would he consider wealth or fame or name for a few years in the present time worthy of exchange at profit, if it were to cost him eternal glory and eternal life? Surely not. We are therefore to have in mind that character-building is absolutely essential to our attaining eternal life upon any plane, by the proposition that God has made us through his Son.

Whoever becomes a follower of the Lord and hopes to gain the prize of everlasting life and glory on the spirit plane must do so whole-heartedly, and not in an underhanded or secret manner. He must come out fully and courageously and properly acknowledge Jesus and acknowledge his words. And Jesus puts himself and his words on a parity—"whoever is ashamed of me and of my words." Jesus' words are Jesus' doctrines or teachings. To be ashamed of the truth, to be ashamed of the divine plan, to be ashamed of what we find to be the teachings of God's Word, because they are unpopular with men, is to offend the Lord and to prove ourselves unworthy of his favor.

All who are of his church will need Christ continually as their Advocate, down to the very last, when he shall present them blameless and unreproveable before the Father in love. (Col. 1:22) And if they would maintain him as their Advocate, they must also be advocating his cause amongst men, not ashamed of him and not ashamed of his doctrine, his words.

That the Lord addressed his words especially to the disciples is shown by his reference to others of that nation who had not made such a consecration as all of his disciples must make. The others were called "an adulterous and sinful generation." The followers of Christ must hold up the Light of Truth before the world, and so doing faithfully they will be acknowledged by the Lord Jesus in due time, when he comes in the glory of his Father with the holy angels. He will not be ashamed to acknowledge them; he will present them to the Father and to the holy angels.

THE GREAT QUESTION

The great question of eighteen centuries ago is the great question of today! Who is Jesus? If, as some claim, he was merely a good man, a most able Teacher, then he was not The Christ, for The Christ, although the embodiment of all these qualities, was more, much more. To be The Christ, he must have been "the Man Christ Jesus," who gave himself a ransom-price for all, to be testified in due time. (1 Tim. 2:5, 6) And this signifies that he must have been, not of ordinary birth, but extraordinary, born from above, because if born in the ordinary course of nature he would be like others of Adam's sons, subject to the sentence of death, and hence unable to save either himself or others. But if he was The Christ, the Sent of God, who left the glory of the Father and was made flesh that he might "taste death for every man," then we behold him as the great Redeemer of the world, whose death was necessary as a ransom, or corresponding price, to secure the release of mankind from the death sentence and to make possible the resurrection of Adam and his race.

More than this, the word Christ signifies The Anointed. The Bible declares that the Anointed Lord shall be the Great King, Prophet and Priest, whose kingdom shall be under the whole heavens—a kingdom which shall last for a thousand years; and shall destroy sin and all who love sin; and which shall lift up all humanity willing to return into harmony with God. According to the Scriptures, this Jesus is—the Messiah. And his present work is the gathering of a bride class, to be his joint-heir in his glorious kingdom, which will be set up soon after the elect church shall have been completed by the glorious change of the first resurrection.

What think ye of Messiah? What think ye of his invitation to become his associates in his glory and kingdom? What think ye of the cost of self-denial, self-sacrifice? What think ye of the great reward? Let those who have made the consecration review the terms; let those who have not made this consecration do as Jesus said: "Sit down and count the cost," before making a decision, so that if they become his disciples they will do so intelligently, and be loyal and faithful in their course.

Only those who appreciate the "High Calling of God in Christ," "The Heavenly calling"—only such will have the necessary incentive to run with patience the race upon which they started when making a consecration; and only those who run the race faithfully will win the prize; and only by the assistance of the Great Advocate can any hope to come off conqueror and "more than conqueror," through his precious blood.

THE KINGDOM IN TABLEAU

MARK 9:2-13.—NOVEMBER 24.

"A voice came out of the cloud, saying, This is my beloved Son; hear ye him. And when the voice was past, Jesus was found alone."—Luke 9:35.

Our studies continue to appertain to Messiah's kingdom of glory. Today's lesson tells of a tableau illustration given to His disciples respecting it. The lesson deeply impressed the three Apostles who witnessed the vision, namely, Peter, James and John. St. Peter referred to it afterward in his epistle (2 Pet. 1:16-19), saying, "We have not followed cunningly devised fables when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eye witnesses of his Majesty . . . when we were with him in the holy mount."

Jesus prepared his disciples for the transfiguration vision, saying, "There be some of them that stand here which shall not taste of death until they see God's Royal Majesty having come with power." The occasion will be remembered. Jesus had foretold his death, quite contrary to the previous expectations of the Apostles, and now he sought to draw their minds gradually to a realization that his death would not mean a repudiation of the promise of the kingdom and its glory but a fulfilment of their expectations on a higher plane. Jesus would formally offer himself to Israel as King riding upon the ass five days before his crucifixion; he would be despised and rejected and crucified; but his kingly office and work would thereby only be confirmed. His authority to be King of the earth, his authority to release mankind from the power of sin and death, his authority to uplift humanity and to bring the earth in general to Paradise conditions, would all be founded upon his sacrificial death at Calvary.

All this was presented to the three chosen disciples six days later. Jesus took them to the mountain-top and was transfigured before them. His flesh and his garments shone and glistened white, after the manner of angels, the vision thus representing the Lord after having experienced his resurrection change from earthly to heavenly conditions. Then with him "talked two men," says St. Luke, "who appeared in glory"—radiant, but less so than Jesus.

In some manner they recognized these two men of the vision as Moses and Elijah. They heard these discourse with Jesus respecting his decease, "which he was about to accomplish at Jerusalem," says St. Luke. How long the vision lasted we are not told, but St. Peter, thinking that he should make some comment on the situation, and not knowing what to say, suggested the building of three tabernacles, one for Jesus, one for Moses, one for Elijah. He evidently thought that the Master would be rejoiced at such blessed fellowship, and he was willing to do anything for his aid.

"THIS IS MY BELOVED SON"

Then came a voice from the overshadowing cloud, saying, "This is my beloved Son, hear ye him!" And suddenly the vision vanished, and they saw only Jesus with them, and he no longer with radiant appearance. What could it all mean? It may be that several good lessons came out of this: (1) During the six days following the announcement of the Master's coming suffering, ignominy and death, we may assume that the Apostles were sad-hearted, bewildered. In this condition it would be a great refreshment, and be strengthening to their faith to witness this vision which testified of Jesus they knew not what, but which showed them that the death he had foretold was a certainty and known of God and of divine approval.

(2) The voice from the cloud would be a fresh encouragement to their faith. They had believed that Jesus was all that he claimed to be—the Son of the Highest. They had believed that he was not an ordinary member of the human family, born in sin, but that he had been particularly and specially born from above by divine power. They had believed his own testimony that he proceeded forth and came from God and that he would return to the Father, but now their faith was corroborated; God himself had testified in this miraculous manner that Jesus was his Son, his Well-Beloved, his Only One.

As the Apostles were coming down the mountainside with Jesus, wondering about the meaning of the vision they had seen, Jesus said to them, "See that ye tell no man the vision until after the Son of Man is risen from the dead." (Matt. 17:9) So "they kept the saying with themselves, questioning one with another what the Lord meant by the rising again from the dead." Thus, little by little, the Great Teacher impressed upon his true disciples great truths which they could not otherwise have learned, seeing that they had not yet been begotten of the holy Spirit; for the holy Spirit was not yet given, the Pentecost blessing had not yet come, because Jesus had not yet suffered nor risen from the dead, nor ascended into the presence of God to make sin-Atonement on their behalf.

The fact that Moses and Elijah appeared as real to the Apostles as though they were in life does not contradict the words of Jesus that what they saw was a vision. We are to remember the many visions given later on to one of these apostles, St. John, recorded in the Book of Revelation. In those visions St. John saw angels and men, horsemen, beasts, crowns, etc., and heard voices and singing and talking, etc., just as in this vision.

THE MEANING OF THE VISION

We have St. Peter's words (2 Pet. 1:16) in corroboration of the text here, that what they saw on the mountain represented the royal majesty of Messiah—the kingdom of Messiah. Moses represented the faithful of natural Israel, the "house of servants"; "Moses as a servant, was faithful over all his house." Elijah represented The Christ in the flesh, the house of sons, which has been in process of development throughout this Gospel age. All of the consecrated, spirit-begotten people of God, during this age, are represented by Elijah, who, God promised, should come before Messiah would set up his kingdom. In other words, the Elijah class is composed of Jesus and all of his footstep followers throughout this Gospel age—in their earthly or fleshly condition, spirit-begotten, but not yet spirit-born.

This Elijah company as a whole must be developed and must do a work in the world before the real kingdom of Messiah can be established. The glorification of Jesus, following his death and resurrection, was due, but as the glorified One he stood between the Moses class, called previously, and the Elijah class, which had just begun to be called to be his joint-heirs in the kingdom. He was thus in their midst, and the crucifixion at Jerusalem was about to fulfil all the conditions necessary to the bringing about of the Messianic reign.

But the glorification of Jesus was not the only thing necessary; the entire church, the body, must suffer with him and be completed and then be joined with him beyond the veil before the kingdom glory can be fully established. This work of calling and preparing an Elijah class has been in progress for more than eighteen centuries and we believe is now nearly completed. As John the Baptist was the forerunner of Jesus in the flesh, so this greater Elijah, the church in the flesh, is the forerunner of the great Messiah on the spirit plane. We must suffer with him if we would share in his resurrection and share in his glory. This was the lesson of the transfiguration vision.

The disciples wondered and queried, saying, "Why do the Pharisees and Scribes tell us," according to the Scriptures, "that Elijah must first come." Jesus answered that, in a sense, to those who could receive it, John the Baptist had thus come, and had introduced Jesus as the Messiah, and that John the Baptist had in a sense fulfilled this prophecy when he introduced the Redeemer-King.

St. Peter's words, already referred to, fully satisfying us that the transfiguration scene was a vision of the coming glory of Christ—"We were eye-witnesses of his Majesty, . . . in the holy mount." Hence there is no doubt whatever, that the promised kingdom will eventually come. The vision on the mount confirms this to us. However, the prophecies of old, which foretold Messiah's coming and reign, are still more authentic, "more sure," they cannot fail; the kingdom merely awaits the sufferings of those who will be the members of the body of Christ. Then, at the second coming of Jesus, these will be blessed and glorified, and the class represented by Moses will also be blessed and used as instruments of the kingdom. Thus in the vision the entire kingdom was represented: first of all, by Jesus himself, second by Elijah, who represented the church class, and third by Moses, who represented the faithful on the earthly plane, through whom the heavenly blessings will pour out upon humanity.

CAN YOU ASSIST IN THIS?

All over the United States "Registry Voters Lists" are being prepared. We have use for such of these lists as cover Rural Routes amongst intelligent farmers. Send us such, please, but not others. We desire to send to such addresses some free literature to assist them toward the light. But this method is too expensive except for exceptionally desirable lists. If lists sent represent Swedes or Germans principally please so indicate on the margin.

INTERESTING LETTER

QUESTIONS RESPECTING CLASS DISCIPLINE

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:—

Some of us desire your further advice on two points:

(1) What attitude should we take toward brethren who hold little meetings not authorized or appointed by the Class with which they are connected?

(2) We note your recommendation concerning testimony meetings and their helpfulness in character-development. What should we do in a case where elders oppose such meetings, but where the Class desire to have them?

THE EDITOR'S REPLY

We think it rather unwise for a brother claiming to be a member of the class to entirely ignore that class in the matter of holding meetings. For him to inaugurate meetings, advertise them, hold them during the regular hours of the meetings of the class, etc., would seem to be in the nature of ignoring the class; and to hold meetings at the same hour might be considered an opposition. However, even though all this were done, it would not constitute a cause of offense or of excommunication. The class should rejoice to know that the Gospel of the kingdom is being preached, even though it were preached in a strifeful and contentious manner, as St. Paul suggests. (Phil. 1:15-18) A class would have no more right to think or speak evil of such a brother and of his effort than to think or speak evil of any Christian minister of any denomination and of his effort.

If, however, a brother were invited to give a little talk in a private or a semi-private manner to a few, not as a regular class, nor as an opposition meeting, nor at a conflicting hour, there would seem to be no ground whatever for reproof. On the contrary, we should all commend his love and zeal and, thanking the Lord for the brother's privileges, seek as good for ourselves.

We are to keep strictly in mind that the Lord has not given any of us a right to supervise His work nor to forbid another to preach the Gospel. The disciples of old did this on one occasion and Jesus rebuked them, saying, "Forbid him not; for there is no man that shall do a miracle in my name, that can lightly speak evil of me." (Mark 9:38-40) Again he said, "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them." (Matt. 18:20) He did not say that the two or three must be authorized, commissioned, or in any manner privileged of men. Hence, whatever there is of co-operation in the church should be merely of love, of wisdom, of estimation of the divine will and the oneness of the church.

We are surprised to learn that there are any in opposition to the weekly testimony meetings which we have so strongly urged. In our experience this class of meeting is one of the most spiritually helpful. In many places if it were necessary to have but one meeting, the classes undoubtedly would hold on to the weekly testimony meeting as the best and most helpful of all. We commend Wednesday night as being a most suitable occasion for this kind of meeting. We have already recommended that the weekly topic be the Manna text of the preceding Thursday. Observing this rule, the Lord's people all over the world can study and think much along the same lines and, looking for experiences in the same direction, obtain corresponding blessings.

We recommend a trial of this method to all of the classes everywhere. They will have plenty to testify about if once they acquire the habit of looking for the Lord's providences in the affairs of life, noting experiences and lessons and comparing them with the instructions of the divine Word. Those who are following this course are often surprised to note how much more every day is worth to them than formerly.

With many, life is a business routine or a dream. As new creatures we desire to have every day full of Christian experiences and intelligent thought directed and moulded by the divine Word. This blessed condition is attained largely by the method we have indicated. Our growth in grace depends not so much on the number of chapters or verses which we read, as upon the exercise of our minds, hearts and wills in connection with what we already know and what we daily learn of the will of God.

It is not for the elders, but for the class to determine what meetings it wishes to hold. When the class decides, the elders, of course, still have their privilege of resigning. Indeed, it would certainly be advantageous, both for the elder and the class, to have such elders resign as desire to rule the Lord's household, instead of desiring to serve it.

However, our experience teaches that frequently supposed oppositions are merely misunderstandings. We advise a careful study afresh of STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES, Vol. VI. Indeed, we remind the dear friends how leaky are all our memories, and of the wisdom, therefore, of the course being followed by a great many—the reading of the entire six volumes of STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES every year—twelve pages or more every day. Those who are following this course report great blessing and give evidence of great clearness in the truth.

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EVIL SPEAKING AND EVIL SURMISING

Many are the peculiar subterfuges which the fallen nature uses in its attempt to stifle the voice of Conscience. We have known people who took cognizance of the Scriptural injunction against slander, evil speaking and evil surmising, and yet who were so confused on the subject and so unaccustomed to scrutinizing their own conduct that they would utter slander in the very breath in which they expressed their strong disapproval of evil speaking. In order to avoid such a condition of confusion it is well to have in mind a clear definition of these terms.

SLANDER A FACTOR IN ANARCHY

A slander is anything uttered with the intention of injury to another, whether the statement be true or false. Both the Law of God and the laws of men agree that such injury is wrong. True, many slanderers are never prosecuted; true that even newspapers have times without number escaped heavy damages for libelous slander, on the plea that they published the defamation as news which properly belonged to the people. Public men consider it good policy to let ordinary slander go unnoticed, realizing that many of the false statements made by the opposition press will properly be credited as falsehood.

The effect of public slander is very injurious, and brings about a gradual growth of slander among the people. This condition is sure to work evil to themselves and to their institutions. Government officials and other men thus slandered lose their influence for good over the lower classes, who are thus being helped along day by way to greater lawlessness, and are being thus prepared for the period of anarchy which the Scriptures tell us is near.

EVIL SPEAKING INDICATIVE OF UNGODLINESS

Evil speaking includes all defamatory or injurious remarks against others—words of hatred, malice, envy or strife—everything which would injure another to any degree. Even an uncomplimentary remark respecting another, injuring his reputation, is evil speaking, although the uncomplimentary statement be true.

All of our words are taken by the Lord as an index of the heart. If our words are flippant, frivolous, unkind, unthankful, rebellious or disloyal, He judges the heart accordingly, on the principle that "Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh." (Matt. 12:34) Thus in all the varied circumstances of daily life, our words are continually bearing testimony before God of the condition of our hearts.

Godlikeness certainly cannot include any harmful gossip, any unclean or unholy conversation, any disloyal or rebellious words. Let all such things be put far away from those who name the name of Christ in sincerity and in truth.

The tongue is the most powerful member of the human body. As the Scriptures say, with it we may praise God or injure men. Not only may we injure those within reach of our tongue, but our words might extend their influence throughout the world and from generation to generation. Our tongues are the most wonderful power that God has given us. It has been said that all of life's experiences deepen when presented in language. When uttered, thoughts impress themselves deeply upon the mind. We should certainly take heed to our tongues.—James 3:9, 10.

EVIL SURMISING INDICATIVE OF AN IMPURE HEART

Evil surmising consists in imagining evil motives to be behind the words and the acts of others. Proceeding out of the heart not fully consecrated, evil surmising will attribute some selfish or evil motive to every good deed. This form of sin is ranked by the Apostle Paul as contrary to the words of our Lord Jesus, opposed to godliness, and of the same spirit as envy and strife—works of the flesh and of the devil.—1 Tim. 6:3-5; Gal. 5:19-21.

Those who have cultivated that spirit of love which "thinketh no evil" have developed their characters and have become

of "quick understanding in the fear of the Lord." (Isa. 11:3) They will be cautious where there is even the appearance of evil, while at the same time they will avoid the imputation of evil intentions until forced to concede them by indisputable evidence. It is far better to take some slight risks and to suffer some trifling losses than to accuse even one innocent person. The Lord, who has directed our course in matters of this kind, is abundantly able to compensate us for any losses experienced in following his counsel.

TO IMPUTE GOOD MOTIVES IS CHARITABLE

The true Christian will cultivate the disposition to think charitably of the words and actions of others, and to suppose that their intentions are good, until he has positive evidence to the contrary. Even then he will go to the offender alone, according to Matt. 18:15, and if occasion require, will take the subsequent steps, as directed by the Lord.—Matt. 18:15-17.

From their high standard of the appreciation of the divine law, advanced Christians see that in the Lord's sight hatred is murder, slander is assassination, and the destruction of a neighbor's good name is robbery. Any of these things done in the church among the professed people of God is doubly evil—the robbery or the murder of a brother.—1 John 3:15.

Verily, with force do the Scriptures declare that the natural heart is "deceitful above all things and desperately wicked." (Jer. 17:9) Those who practice evil speaking and evil surmising and who attempt to justify their conduct have either never entered the school of Christ or else are only in the infant class, for they seem not to know that theirs is not the spirit of brotherly love.

DIFFERENT WAYS OF MISREPRESENTING OTHERS

False witness applies not only to the utterance of falsehood, but also to any form of misrepresentation, whether by direct statement or by such indirect statement that a wrong inference may be drawn. One may bear false witness by a nod of the head, by a shrug of the shoulder or even by silence when he should speak.

One of the hardest lessons, apparently, for Christians to learn thoroughly is the Master's command that if they have anything unpleasant to say respecting a brother or a sister, any criticism to offer concerning the private life of another, they should go to the person alone. (Matt. 18:15-17) Perhaps in no other way does the adversary succeed so well in planting roots of bitterness, producing misunderstandings, anger, malice, hatred, strife, and other works of the flesh and the devil, as in deterring the Lord's people from obedience to this command. Let us permit love to do her perfect work in our relationship to others.

LOVE A PREVENTIVE OF EVIL THOUGHTS

The law of love forbids the Lord's people to follow the pernicious example of the world. That law commands silence to all who acknowledge the great Law Giver, saying, "Speak evil of no man." (Titus 3:2) Further than this, it declares against evil thoughts, evil suspicions and evil surmisings: Love "thinketh no evil." (1 Cor. 13:5) Love filling our hearts will not only hinder evil conduct and injurious words, but will prevent evil thoughts.

Indeed, to impress the importance of this subject, the Great Teacher declares to the pupils in his school, "With what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged." (Matt. 7:2) Again he instructs them to pray, "Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us." (Matt. 6:12, 14, 15) Again he declares, "If ye from your hearts forgive not every one his brother their trespasses, so likewise shall my Heavenly Father do also unto you." (Matt. 18:35) If at heart we treasure up resentment against others, the Heavenly Father will not forgive us.

PURITY OF HEART AN ADVANCED STAGE OF DISCIPLESHIP

Those Christians who are elders in the school of Christ and who are therefore qualified to teach others, are not only outwardly clean, but inwardly also. They are washed by the water of the Word from the meanness, the filthiness of the flesh. No longer the slaves of sin, they are not controlled by the desires and the weaknesses of the fallen flesh and the spirit of the world. They do not bear the fruits of unrighteousness—anger, malice, hatred, strife, slander, evil speaking, evil surmising.—2 Cor. 7:1.

A pure heart signifies purity of will, of intention, or purpose, which like the needle to the pole, always turns toward righteousness. Though some sudden or strong temptation may for an instant, through the weakness of the flesh, draw it to the right or to the left, yet it quickly recovers its normal position, which is loyalty to truth and righteousness. A pure heart loves righteousness and hates iniquity. It loves purity and despises impurity and unrighteousness. It loves cleanliness of person, of clothing, of language and of habits. It delights in the society of the pure and shuns all others, knowing that "Evil communications corrupt good manners."—1 Cor. 15:33.

We should distinguish sharply between purity of heart, will, intention, and absolute purity of every act, word and thought; for while the former is possible, the latter is impossible so long as we have our mortal bodies and are surrounded by our present unfavorable conditions. The standard set before us is, "Be ye perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect." (Matt. 5:48) By this standard we are to measure ourselves continually, and not by one another; and to this standard we are to seek to bring all the conduct of our lives as well as the meditations of our hearts.—2 Cor. 10:12; Psa. 19:14.

But only our wills (hearts) have yet been transformed and renewed. Our imperfect earthen vessels in which we have this treasure will not be "changed" until our resurrection. Not until then shall we be perfected in the divine likeness. But now, nothing short of purity of heart, will, intention, can be acceptable to God and bring us a blessing.—2 Cor. 4:7; 1 Cor. 15:52.

HOW TO MAINTAIN PURITY OF HEART

Those who have made a full consecration of heart to the Lord constitute the pure in heart under the law of love. But notwithstanding the purity of their hearts, their intentions, their wills, to fulfil the royal law of love, these have a battle to wage. The law of their members, depraved through inherited sin, is the strong law of selfishness, in opposition to the new Law to which they have pledged themselves—the law of love.—Rom. 13:10; James 2:8.

Yet their inability to live up to the requirements of that new law must be through no lack of will, no lack of intention of the pure, loyal heart. Whatever failure they make, however short they may come at times of obtaining the victory, it must be solely because of weakness of the flesh and the besetments of the adversary, which their pure hearts failed to resist.

Here the Lord's promises are helpful, assuring them that he knows their weaknesses and frailties, as well as the wiles of the devil and the influence of the spirit of the world, which are contrary to the spirit of love. He tells them that they may go freely to the throne of heavenly grace, there to obtain mercy in respect to their failures to live up to the high standard which their hearts acknowledge and to which they strive to conform. He also assures them that they may find grace to help in every time of need.—Heb. 4:16; Eph. 6:12.

Availing themselves of these mercies and privileges provided through our Great High Priest they are enabled to fight a good fight against sin, to repulse its attacks upon their hearts, and to drive it off, if it has succeeded in invading their flesh.

Thus, and only thus, may the Christian keep himself pure in heart and maintain his stand as a fighter of the good fight, one of the overcomers of the world and its spirit.

SELF-DECEPTION OF THE IMPURE HEART

The mind of the flesh will seek to enter into partnership with the new mind, and will be very ready to accept love as the rule of life, under certain conditions. The mind of the flesh would prefer to recognize love in words, in profession, in manners only—a form of godliness without its power.—2 Tim. 3:5.

Gentle manners, such as love would manifest, may be exercised by a selfish heart, deceiving itself and seeking to deceive others. On the lip may be the smile, the word of praise, of kindness, of gentleness, while in the heart may be feelings of selfishness, of grudge, of bitterness, of animosity. Under favorable conditions these hidden motions of sin in the flesh may manifest themselves in more or less carefully worded slander or back-biting or reproach. Or these, continuing to rankle in the heart, may when opportunity affords bring forth anger, hatred, malice, strife and other wicked works of the flesh and the devil, wholly contrary to the course of a pure heart and at variance with the commandment of the law of the new creation—love.—2 Tim. 3:13; Rom. 7:5; Gal. 5:19-21.

We are to have clearly before our minds the fact that the ultimate object of all the divine dealings with us and for us, and the ultimate signification of all the divine promises made to us, is the development of love, which in godlikeness, for God is love. That this love may be developed in us in the sense and to the degree intended by the Lord, it must come from a pure heart, in full accord with the Lord and his law of love, but wholly antagonistic to the adversary and his law of unholy pride, jealousy and selfishness.—1 Tim. 1:5.

LOVE DEVELOPED BY THE PRINCIPLES OF RIGHTEOUSNESS

To have this kind of love in its proper development there must be a good conscience, well regulated by the Scriptures; therefore the study of God's Word is very important. Meditation upon God's law is also necessary. We must recognize the fact that there are divine commands with principles behind

them and that these principles are to be incorporated into our characters. In other words, we are to have the mind of Christ. (1 Cor. 2:16) As the Apostle says, "Walk in the Spirit and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh."—Gal. 5:16.

This admonition means that we should guard all the actions of life, as well as all our words; for these are a source of either blessing or ill to others and to ourselves. "As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he." (Prov. 23:7) Some may deceive others for a time, but the Lord knows whether we are seeking to please him.

We are to endeavor to please the Lord in all things and to watch the outward conduct so that our walk in life may be circumspect. Even though we know that the world will take our very best thoughts and endeavors for hypocrisy, nevertheless, our way is clearly marked out—the way of the Lord—the way of wisdom.

THE KINDNESS, HUMILITY AND PATIENCE OF LOVE

"God is Love."—1 John 4:8.

In the Scriptures the word love is used to express the complete whole of the grand and glorious qualities which make up the perfection of Jehovah. God is the personification of love. To whatever extent any one possesses this quality of love to that extent he has character-likeness to God. Whoever is fully in God's likeness may be said to be love; for love is the great principle which represents most fully the divine character.

"God is love," our Lord Jesus is love; and when the church is perfect, each member of the body will also be love. This great principle will have full control of all that we do and say, even as now it has control in the hearts of the Lord's people, despite the weaknesses of the flesh, which prevent its full expression. When all the imperfection is taken away, those who attain the prize of our glorious high calling will have the image of God, the image of the Lord. The hope of attaining the likeness of the divine character is the great ambition which inspires us to faithfulness of endeavor.

Incidentally, it may be remarked that faith, hope and love are fruits of the holy Spirit. Although every good and perfect gift comes from the Father (James 1:17), nevertheless, there is a difference between a "gift" and a "fruit." Possession of a gift may be acquired immediately, but a fruit requires time in which to develop. So with the fruits of the holy Spirit.

Here we see displayed the wisdom of God. Development is a gradual work. With those who have that earnest desire and determined zeal for righteousness which God wishes them to have, every word and every act has something to do with the development of this quality of love. Our Heavenly Father does not expect us to acquire perfection of love in the flesh, for its weaknesses and imperfections will not permit us to do so; but he expects to find in those who will be members of the body of Christ that earnestness of spirit and faithful endeavor which demonstrate that if they had perfect bodies they would always manifest love.

In order to reach this degree of development of character, we must not live after the flesh, the old creature, but must train our minds to desire only those things which are true, pure, loving and good. In this sense of the word we are to be copies of our Lord Jesus Christ.

KINDNESS NOT ALWAYS LOVE

The followers of Christ have consecrated their own wills and have been begotten of the holy Spirit, which is the Spirit of Love; for it is the Spirit of God, who is love. Therefore their sentiment toward one another must be one of loving interest. Perhaps they are not always wise in knowing how to exercise loving-kindness; sometimes their fallen nature may lead them to think that a certain course of action would be the loving one, when it is the very reverse—the wrong course. Hence we need to be on the alert to perceive to what extent we are using the spirit of a sound mind in our conduct and in our dealings with one another.

A person might manifest kindness in word and act without having the right motive. Sometimes kindness is prompted by motives other than love. It might be for selfish reasons, or for the purpose of entrapping another to his disadvantage. This form of fraud has become so common as to cause no particular comment.

The Christian's experience is a continual schooling. Daily we are learning more and more about ourselves and about the wisdom and justice of God. As we learn these lessons day by day, we are learning more to reprobate and correct in ourselves. In thus discovering our own imperfections, we should learn, as a matter of course, not to expect perfection in others; and we should give them credit for doing their best to exemplify the highest ideals which they have in respect to the unity and perfection required for membership in the body of Christ.

Love is always kind; love cannot wilfully injure another. The parent who loves his child will not do anything to harm that child. He might sometimes make a mistake and punish the child unjustly, but the motive behind a loving parent's action will always be kind and true.

Love might sometimes be regarded as unkind, for the principles governing the actions of the individual might be misunderstood. When our Heavenly Father forbade Adam and Eve to partake of the fruit of the tree of knowledge, he had a wise reason for so doing. No doubt he would have eventually permitted them to partake of that fruit; but it was kindness on his part to keep them in ignorance of that fact. Thinking God to be unkind, ungenerous toward them, Eve thought to obtain her rights. So with us. If our Heavenly Father's kindness is not always understood, we may not be surprised if we have a similar experience. Although our spirit, or motive, may be right, yet we may not always have the ability to manifest it; and so we must make due allowance when others misunderstand us.

THE POWER OF INDWELLING LOVE

Man was originally made in the image of God (Gen. 1:26, 27); but by reason of the fall of Adam, his balance of mind has been destroyed. Those who have the mind, or will of Christ are able to overcome some of the inequalities of their natural disposition and to think soberly of their own knowledge and ignorance and of that of others. This ability to appreciate the true state of affairs is the secret of much of our blessing in the Lord.

When we see others who have a smaller appreciation of justice than we have and who do things contrary to the principles of righteousness, we rejoice that we know better and are able to do better than they. The spirit of a sound mind shows us that we have more ability along some lines than have some others, and that others have more ability along some lines than we. Because of the fall of man, all are weak in one direction or another. The knowledge of the imperfect condition of humanity should humble us rather than puff us up.

Humility of mind comes only after the attainment of considerable knowledge of Christ. Knowledge puffs up because of selfishness of heart, because we are more likely to be conscious of our own good qualities than of those of others. Hence those born with less selfishness have less to contend with, and those born with more of it have more to contend with; and in proportion as we have the Spirit of Christ, we are able to overcome the tendency to be puffed up with what little knowledge we possess. Indwelling love has the power to build up, to strengthen character, and to counteract the wrong effect of the fallen human nature.

PROPER AND IMPROPER CAUSES OF PROVOCATION

The whole world has a tendency to recognize the principles of justice. Even those whose conduct toward others is far from just, seem to crave an opportunity to fight against injustice, provided that the case is not one with which they are identified. This inclination often manifests itself in acts of violence, as when mobs vent their anger against some poor sinner who has done something to provoke their wrath. The least virulent amongst them have perhaps done wrong also, yet they seize the opportunity to show their indignation against wrongdoing and seem to take delight in punishing the offender.

The Lord's people should not possess this spirit of intolerance. We should have patience, sympathy and endurance when things go wrong, and should make due allowance for those who are transgressors. The more we possess of the spirit of patience, the more we have of the spirit of forbearance and the more difficult it is to arouse us to anger. Whenever the spirit of love prevails, its possessor is not easily moved to do or say anything unkind or unjust. Love makes us very patient with those with whom we are associated; it is anxious to throw the mantle of charity over everything that seems to be wrong.

Love would have us remember that while another may be in error, it does not follow that he is at fault. He may not have understood a matter correctly or his judgment may not have been the best, owing to inherited weakness over which he has no control. Before condemning any one we should make sure that he is at fault. Justice demands that we do no less than investigate before we condemn. Love urges us to be as merciful in the case as is possible.

God is the very personification of love, yet the Scriptures

tell us that he has been provoked at different times. While passing through the wilderness, the children of Israel aroused his indignation repeatedly. (Psa. 78:40, 56; 95:7-11) The idolatrous tendencies of that nation brought divine wrath upon them and sent them into captivity to Babylon. (Jer. 7:17-20) Finally, their rejection and crucifixion of our Lord Jesus Christ brought upon them "wrath to the uttermost" and caused their dispersion into all parts of the earth.

RIGHTEOUS INDIGNATION A PROPER FEELING

The Lord's people are not to be of that immovable kind that cannot feel any resentment of injustice. Lack of ability to have just indignation would imply lack of morals and of harmony with God. Of our Lord Jesus it is written that when he beheld the unrighteous condition of the rulers of his people, and saw the injustice of their conduct, he "looked round about on them with anger, being grieved for the hardness of their hearts." (Mark 3:5) Like him, we should be wholly out of sympathy with everything not in harmony with God.

We are to love righteousness and hate iniquity. This word iniquity, which means the very opposite of love, is a strong expression. A person who is indifferent to matters of right and wrong is indifferent to the character of God, who is in opposition to all forms of iniquity. Of our Lord, the Scriptures say, "Thou lovest righteousness, and hatest wickedness; therefore God, Thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows." (Psa. 45:7) All who are cultivating character pleasing to God, all who are endeavoring to become exact copies of his dear Son, should put away every impurity, everything not right. Whatever is wrong should always be opposed by our new minds.

On the other hand, if we have love as the Lord has it, we shall hate the wrong, but not the individual who does wrong. In proportion as love controls our minds and hearts, we shall feel sympathy for those who are in iniquity, for we remember that the race of mankind are fallen from their original perfection. We should think that to do evil is not their intention, their will, but that they are suffering from an iniquitous disease. Love is patient and tries to find extenuating circumstances and conditions. It seeks to help the evil-doer and is not easily provoked to anger.

But the word "provoke" signifies to incite to; in another place the Apostle says, "Provoke one another to love and good works." (Heb. 10:24) "Love should say and do those things that will incite to loving words rather than stir up bitterness, which leads to anger, wrath, malice, strife and evil-speaking." (Eph. 4:31, 32) In other words, it is much better to be a peacemaker than a strife-maker. Yet we are not to have peace at any price; rather we should have peace, if possible, where principle is not involved. We should stir up strife only where some good is sure to result.

The degree of love, the strength of love, may be determined by the ease with which it may be swerved and aroused to opposition or to impatience and anger. We have already seen that there may be times when patience might stand in the way of the real interests of the case and where love would take steps to correct what seemed to be an apparent evil; but we must remember that balance of mind, or judgment, is not ours by nature. Perfection of decision is a quality belonging only to our Heavenly Father and our Lord Jesus Christ.

"Let patience have her perfect work." (James 1:4) The Father would not be provoked to anger with anything trivial. With us, however, our balance of judgment is so poor that generally we are too hasty. Very few of us take in the full circumstances surrounding ourselves and those with whom we have to do; therefore growth in grace and growth in knowledge will have to do with the degree of love exhibited by each one.

GENEROSITY AND SYMPATHY TO BE CULTIVATED

We are in the school of Christ, the Great Teacher. We have the words of the Heavenly Father, of our Lord Jesus and of the apostles recorded in the Bible; therefore we should know the difference between right and wrong. On the other hand, we see that sin exists in the world. Mankind are imperfect in mind and morals. This condition is hereditary—the result of Adam's transgression, more than six thousand years ago. Yet with all our advantages of knowledge, we "cannot do the things that we would"; consequently, we feel a measure of sympathy for ourselves, and we should extend the same measure to others. Indeed, we should be more critical of ourselves than of others, although the Lord's Word says that we are not to judge either ourselves or others. We cannot read the hearts of those around us and therefore are not competent to decide what motives prompt their actions nor what degree of punishment should be meted out to them.

Nevertheless, we are to observe right and wrong conduct among our neighbors. We may know that they have, figuratively speaking, a bad tree and therefore bring forth bad fruit; and we should consider why they have a tree that produces such fruitage. Perhaps they were less favorably born than we. Perhaps they have never been in the school of Christ and have never heard the Great Teacher or the apostles. If so, our sympathy should go out to them and our attitude of mind toward them should be such that we will not be provoked by their shortcomings, but should manifest generosity of heart toward them.

To attain this sympathy and generosity is a part of our instruction in the school of Christ, but we do not learn all pertaining to the subject in a day or a week. We get "here a little, there a little" (Isa. 28:10); and if we are following on to know the Lord, our mental discernment will become clearer and our minds will broaden in sympathy for others. Thus we shall become more like our Father in Heaven, for he is kind to the unthankful and just to the unjust, as our Lord pointed out.—Matt. 5:44-48.

PRIDE A CAUSE OF MUCH IRRITABILITY

Undoubtedly the causes for irritability and for being provoked vary in different persons. With some, it is because of a nervous condition of health, which renders them less easily able to control themselves according to the standards which they themselves recognize. With others, the cause of irritability is pride. In fact, pride is connected with nearly everything that is injurious to the people of God. Wherever pride exists, the person is susceptible to evil influences from every quarter.

Pride manifests itself in various ways. Sometimes it exhibits itself as self-esteem, leading one to think too highly of himself and too lightly of others, even to the extent of imagining himself to be their superior. At other times, pride manifests itself as approbativeness: anything that conflicts with the desire to appear well before others touches a tender spot.

We are not to be indifferent to these things. If we have pride or approbativeness, we are to seek to control it with the spirit of love and sympathy for others, instead of letting the wrong spirit control us. The best way to do this is to practise generosity and to provoke others to love and good works instead of to anger. Let us remember that humility is one of the great lessons to be learned in the school of Christ; obedience to the instructions of the Teacher along this line has very much to do with our ever getting into the kingdom.

One of the best aids to the learning of this important lesson is to learn to judge ourselves—to scrutinize our own motives. If we find that we have acted unjustly toward another, we should go and make amends to the best of our ability; we should properly scourge our own minds, and seek to make matters right with the one we have wronged. For a person who is proud or who is sensitive to the good opinion of others, it is very difficult to apologize; but the best thing to do is to set the matter right as speedily as possible, and repeatedly, if necessary. Thus we may have help along the line where we should have it, by overcoming our pride and vanity.

The members of the body of Christ are all to be copies of God's dear Son. This does not mean that God's dear people will be able always to control their looks and actions and words, but that the heart must recognize this standard and strive to attain it. Every time a person who has some weakness along this line of pride or vanity will apologize for a wrong done he will by that act show both God and man that his heart recognizes the right principle. A great blessing will come to him because of his following very strictly the divine Word; thus he will gradually overcome his weakness and strengthen his character.

ST. PAUL'S GREAT MISSION

"For Christ sent me . . . to preach the Gospel."—1 Cor. 1:17.

Learning has always been very properly held in high esteem, and those who have it usually appreciate this fact as well as do those who have it not. There is, therefore, on the part of the learned, or those who appear to be so, a tendency to do or say things or to discuss subjects that would make them shine before others.

St. Paul had a good education. He had much advantage every way; consequently he had the greater temptation to display his knowledge. In his Epistle to the Corinthians, he was addressing a people who were familiar with Greek philosophy and who knew that the world valued this philosophy so highly that a person who did not manifest acquaintance with Greek learning was considered an ignoramus.

The Apostle realized that his great mission was not that of

making himself shine, but of preaching the Gospel—the "good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people." (Luke 2:10) As an ambassador of Christ, he had been given the privilege of becoming a sharer in his sufferings in the present age and in the glories to follow in Christ's kingdom. He saw clearly that his commission transcended anything and everything else in the world, and that from the divine point of view all other philosophies are foolishness. He had wisely concluded that he would neither detract from his own mission to discuss these theories of man, nor would he quarrel with those who accepted them.

Since those who would be blessed by hearing the Gospel would be those whom the Lord wished to gather, St. Paul determined to preach nothing but Christ. He would not mix the doctrines of Christ with those of Plato, although he knew that if he were to mention Plato and then to present Christ as a great philosopher, he would win the attention of the Greeks, who would say, "Here is another teacher of immortality and kindred themes," and then listen to St. Paul's discourse.

St. Paul was well aware that the teaching of Christ is the very reverse of Plato's theory—that man has inherent immortality, that when he seems to die, he then really begins to live. Man has nothing that will commend him to God or give him everlasting life. But if he can come to a condition of harmony with God, he will have the blessing of everlasting life and happiness. The Apostle knew that while no fallen man can obtain this for himself, God has made provision for all, both through the redemption price laid down at Calvary and also through the restoration of all things by the Redeemer.—Acts 3:19-21.

How wise St. Paul was! How sad that the early church did not profit by his course! Long years after the apostles fell asleep, the mixture of the Platonic philosphy and the Gospel of Christ wrought havoc in Christian faith, and built up the great anti-Christian system Scripturally called "Babylon." St. Paul was wise in that he would not discuss the topics usually taught by the Greek philosophers, but gave his whole time to the presentation of the philosophy of the plan of the ages. He preached Christ, able now to save "to the uttermost" all who come to the Father by him (Heb. 7:25), all who have the appreciative ear, and able in his kingdom to bring all mankind to a knowledge of God's goodness by opening their deaf ears to receive the truth. He showed that the whole work of sin and of devastation through death, as it has been accomplished in the human family, will ultimately be undone.

THE WEAK POINT IN MODERN PREACHING

Many of St. Paul's hearers would have been glad to learn about Christ as the great Jewish Teacher and to admit that his philosophy was good. They would have been willing to hear that Christ will some day reign and uplift humanity. A great obstacle, however, stood in the way. This One who was being preached had not borne a good reputation. According to the testimony of his own nation, he had been crucified as a malefactor.

A weaker man than St. Paul might have followed the policy of covering up the fact of the crucifixion of Christ. He might have said that the Jews did not appreciate what Christ was doing, that Christ was the Son of God, the mighty Logos; and then he might have glossed over the death of Christ on the cross. Thus the Gentiles might have regarded our Lord as a great Teacher and never have learned of the manner of his death until some Jew should tell them that their great Teacher had been a malefactor, so wicked that he was not fit to live. Should they then have asked St. Paul whether this was true, he could have explained that it was a fact, but that the great mass of the Jewish people had not consented to this act of their rulers and therefore were not a party to it.

This glossing over of truth is what is done today in all of the great pulpits of Christendom. If our Lord's death is mentioned at all, it is done in an apologetic manner. But St. Paul preached that Christ's death was necessary to redeem the human race, and that under the terms of the Law Covenant, he must die on the cross in order to redeem Israel from the curse of the law.—Gal. 3:13.

Thus the Apostle did not shun to declare the whole counsel of God in the strongest form. (Acts 20:27) Crucifixion was the only way in which our Lord's death would be of full value and accomplish the purpose intended. Had he not died, the "just for the unjust," he could not have been the Redeemer of the whole world. This message was so great, so different from anything else in the world, that the Apostle concluded that he had no time for the discussion of any other topic.

There might have been occasions when St. Paul could have discussed something else. Although he might have had the opportunity to say that he did not believe in the Platonic philosophy at all, yet he did not intend to display what he knew about worldly philosophies. So it is with us. We are to discuss the truth rather than the error. If we should have occasion to mention the error, it should be only as a side-light to illuminate the truth by contrast.

There are many subjects in which there is a measure of truth—geology, astronomy, etc.—but to preach these would be to neglect, not only to set forth the great central message that man is a sinner and can have no reconciliation with God except through the death of Christ, but to show what constitutes discipleship, what is to be its reward and what the result of the glorification of the church with Christ. This message of the Gospel is not preached today. On the contrary, much foolishness is set forth in the name of Christ and in churches dedicated to the service of the Lord. We are not to imitate this course and to strive for popularity in preaching. We are to follow in the footsteps of Jesus and his disciples.

Observation has taught us that those consecrated ones who have permitted other themes than "this Gospel" to engross time and attention are in great danger of being led astray. We advise such to be very jealous in husbanding time and talent for the ministry of the Gospel. Let us leave all other subjects, no matter how interesting, to others. In the future, when all knowledge shall be ours, we can discuss them. Those who from any avoidable cause turn aside from the ministry of the true and only Gospel are quickly turned out of the way, or else are greatly hindered in their course toward "the prize of the high calling."—Phil. 3:14.

GOD'S WILL CONCERNING THE CHURCH

"This is the will of God [concerning you], even your sanctification."—1 Thess. 4:3.

In our text the expression, "This is the will of God," is in the nature of advice rather than command. Considering the class to whom this advice is given, we find them to be those who desire to draw near to God and to have him draw near to them. God had promised a great reward for submission to his will in every particular; and the Apostle Paul is stating what the will of God is concerning those who desire to live in nearness to him. He tells them that it is God's will that they be fully set apart to his service; that they lay down their lives in his work; that in all the affairs of life their hearts should be set to know and to do his will.

In words of loving entreaty the Apostle elsewhere addresses this class, saying, "I beseech you, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service." (Rom. 12:1) The phrase, "Present your bodies," includes not only the primary presentation, but the continuation of the living sacrifice to the completion of the work. In other words, the Gospel age is the acceptable time when God is willing to receive those who come unto him through Christ. It is the time for his drawing, calling, those who are to become members of the Elect Church.

God's will for his believing people, justified by faith in the ransom and consecrated to his service, has always been the same as the Apostle stated, namely, "This is the will of God [concerning you], even your sanctification." To produce this sanctification in believers God has given unto us "exceeding great and precious promises," and declares that the truth of his Word will produce the sanctification of character acceptable to him—conformity to the image of his dear Son, our Redeemer.

Sanctification does not mean human perfection. It is the consecration, or devotion of the will, which through Christ is accepted of the Father as perfect; it is a consecration of the body to sacrifice—even unto death. As we have seen, that body is not made actually perfect through justification by faith, but merely reckonedly perfect, according to our will, our heart, our intention. The new will should seek to bring every power, every talent, every endowment of its body, into full accord with the Lord, and should seek to exercise an influence in the same direction upon all with whom it comes in contact.

This does not mean, however, that in the few short years of the present life it will be able to bring its poor, imperfect body to perfection. On the contrary, the Apostle assures us in connection with the church, that in death it is sown in corruption, sown in weakness, sown in dishonor, sown a [an imperfect] natural body (1 Cor. 15:42-44); and that not until in the resurrection we are given new bodies, strong, perfect, glorious, immortal, shall we have attained the perfection which we seek and which the Lord promises shall be ours eventually, if in the present time of weakness and imperfection we manifest to him the loyalty of our hearts.

Our text, as well as many other portions of the Scriptures, teaches us that the great work which God asks of us is not for others, but is a work in ourselves, subduing, conquering, ruling self. Everything else, therefore, our doing service to the household of faith, our doing good unto all men, by home or foreign missions, etc., is subservient to this most important work within. For, as the Apostle by inspiration declares, though we should preach the Gospel eloquently to others, and though we should give all our goods to feed the poor, or become martyrs for a good cause, we should be nothing from the divine viewpoint, without love—the Spirit of Christ and of the Father—developed in us as the ruling principle of life. (1 Cor. 13:3) But before we can "put on love—the bond of perfection"—and have its rule established, we have many enemies to put out.

OUR THREE GREAT FOES

The heart is the battleground on which the holy Spirit helps us to wage warfare against the enemies which since the Adamic fall have taken possession of the human mind. Our battle is to be against Sin, the great taskmaster, which captured our race more than six thousand years ago. Satan, the great master or general of Sin, is our enemy, and has largely to do with the various influences against which we must contend. We are not, however, to battle directly with Satan, though we are to "resist" him; that is, we are to resist his influence, his deceptions, and his endeavors to lead us into error and into sin. We should be powerless against this great enemy were it not that our Lord Jesus has conquered Sin, and he is on our part, so that we can confidently say, Greater is he that is on our part than all they that be against us.

Again, our battle is with the world. By this we do not mean with our fellow-creatures; for, blinded by the adversary, they are little, if at all, accountable for their course. We are to do battle with "the spirit of the world" and its influences. The disposition of the world, the mind of the world, the motives which actuate the world, the ambitions of the world, the pride of life and the deceitfulness of riches—the wrong views of matters as seen from the worldly standpoint—we are to resist, to fight against. And it is a daily battle.

Finally, our battle is with the flesh—our flesh. Ever since Sin captured our race, its slavery has been conducive to mental, moral and physical degradation. Its every tendency has been toward evil, and that continually; and although our Lord Jesus had compassion on us and redeemed us from slavery to Sin, with his own precious blood, yet we have in our bodies the motions, the tendencies toward sin.

So, although we are now free, and are with the mind serving the Law of Christ, and although we have covenanted to battle for righteousness, truth, goodness and purity, we find our new selves harassed by the old, perverted tastes and inclinations of our own flesh toward the service of the old taskmaster. Not the least of our battles, therefore, is against these perverted tendencies of our flesh; and the battle with these is also a daily battle. With the great Apostle Paul we should be able to say, "I keep my body [my flesh and its desires] under"—in subjection to my new will, the new creature.

From the moment we make a full consecration of ourselves unto death in the service of the Lord, he reckons our flesh as dead, and begets us as new creatures. Our new minds are alive toward God with a newness of life. Hence those motions of sin which we are seeking to bring into absolute subjection to the will of God in Christ are not recognized by the Lord as the will or the motions of the new creature enlisted in his service, but merely as a part of the general enemy, Sin, pursuing after and battling with us. These we are pledged to resist, and to war against; and to overcome these he promises sufficient grace.

These enemies in our own flesh cause us the greatest difficulties. To these Satan appeals; these he seeks to encourage in the warfare against the new spirit of our minds; through these the spirit of the world gains closest approach to us, and seeks to capture us and lead us back as captives to Sin. So to speak, the "new creature in Christ" is beset, surrounded on every hand with enemies seeking its disaster and re-enslavement. We must battle for ourselves, for our own liberty, for victory over our own weaknesses; we must battle against the spirit of the world, against delusions and snares of the adversary by which he would make evil things appear good, and right to appear undesirable. No wonder that the child of God is urged to be continually watchful; that he is urged to "put on the whole armor of God"; that he is cautioned in respect to his various wily foes and especially against those of his own flesh; that he is urged to faithfulness and loyalty of heart!

Heart-loyalty to the Lord means continual effort to bring all the conduct of our lives, yea, the very thoughts and intents of our hearts, into subjection to the divine will. (2 Cor. 10:4, 5) This is our first duty, our continual duty, and will be the end of our duty; for "This is the will of God, even your sanctification." "Be ye holy; for I [the Lord] am holy."—1 Peter 1:16.

Absolute holiness is to be the standard which our minds can gladly and fully indorse and live up to, but to which we can never attain actually and physically so long as we are subject to the frailties of our fallen natures and the besetments of the world and the adversary. But day by day we are taught of God; and as we come to a fuller knowledge of his glorious character, and as the appreciation of it more and more fills our hearts, the new mind will more and more gain influence, strength, power, over the weaknesses of the flesh, whatever they may be—and these weaknesses vary with the different members of the body.

If we be sanctified to God by the truth, if our wills be dead and the Lord's will be fully accepted as ours, in thought, word and deed, then we have attained the will of God, and shall win the prize as "overcomers" even if we have never had opportunity to preach, to give to the poor, or to suffer as martyrs for the truth's sake. Let us all note well this point: "This is the Lord's will [concerning you], even your sanctification." Let nothing becloud or obscure this truth; but let is dominate our course in life. Then if God's will is really our will, we have a clearly marked pathway before us.

But without doubt, before all such God will open opportunities to serve the truth to others, to let their light shine to the glory of the Father and the blessing of fellow creatures; for this is his command to us, and we may be sure he gives us no commands impossible to be obeyed. If you have been seeking opportunities of service and have found none, there must be something wrong; you may have been seeking some special service of your own preference (your old will meddling with your newly adopted will—the Lord's).

Possibly the great Teacher sees in you pride, which you would have been prompt to crush had you recognized it, but which hid itself from you under the cloak of "selfrespect." Possibly the great Teacher by his providence and his Word is saying to you, "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might." (Eccl. 9:10) Possibly he sees that you would be spoiled were he to give you a more important service for others, before you have learned the lesson of humility—all important in God's sight. Act quickly, therefore; the time is short.

SANCTIFICATION THE RESULT OF LOVE OF GOD

True sanctification of the heart to the Lord means diligence in his service; a declaration of the good tidings to others; the building up of one another in the most holy faith. It also means that we do good unto all men as we have opportunity, especially unto the household of faith; that in these various ways our lives, consecrated to the Lord, shall be laid down for the brethren day by day, opportunity by opportunity, as they shall come to us; that our love for the Lord, for the brethren, for our families and sympathetically for the world of mankind, will increasingly fill our hearts as we grow in grace, knowledge and obedience to the divine Word and example.—Gal. 6:10; 1 John 3:16.

Nevertheless, all this exercising of our energies for others is merely one of the many ways in which by the Lord's providence our own sanctification may be accomplished. As iron sharpeneth iron, so our energies in behalf of others bring blessings to ourselves. Additionally, while we should more and more come to the condition of loving our neighbors as ourselves—especially the household of faith—yet the mainspring back of all this should be our supreme love for our Creator and Redeemer, and our desire to be and to do what would please him. Our sanctification, therefore, must be primarily toward God and first affect our own hearts and wills and, as a result of such devotion to God, find its exercise in the interest of the brethren and of all men.

CALMNESS OF TRUTH

All truth is calm,
  Refuge and Rock and Tower;
The more of truth the more of calm,
  Its calmness is its power.
Truth is not strife,
  Nor is to strife allied;
It is the error that is bred
  Of storm, by rage and pride.
Calmness is truth.
  And truth is calmness still;
Truth lifts its forehead to the storm,
  Like some eternal hill. —H. Bonar.

THE TWO PARTS OF THE WORK OF REDEMPTION

The statement of the law is very positive—"The man that doeth these things shall live by them." Whoever keeps God's commands will live in them and will receive everlasting life as a reward for keeping them. (Lev. 18:5; Rom. 10:5) In making the promise of life to the Jews, God did not tell them in what manner he would arrange for its fulfilment. As a matter of fact, although the Jews did not understand the types of the Law Covenant, God had showed how the keeping of that covenant would give everlasting life; namely, through sacrifice.

In his great plan of the ages God had already provided a Redeemer. (Eph. 1:4) It was therefore in view of this provision of divine grace that the promise of life through keeping the law could be made. But in giving the Law Covenant, God did not omit the great Atonement sacrifice, which was the type of the work of Redemption.

That our Lord had some understanding with the Heavenly Father before he was made flesh is self-evident; for his change of nature is represented as a voluntary act on his part. (Phil. 2:8) He took not upon himself the nature of angels, but that of the seed of Abraham. (Heb. 2:16) He had an object in taking upon himself the nature of Abraham's descendants. He did so "for the joy that was set before him." (Heb. 12:2) This expression implies that he had some knowledge of the nature of the work which he had come to accomplish.

This knowledge which our Lord possessed in his pre-human condition did not include the understanding of all the various types of which he was to be the antitype, but evidently he knew that this stooping from the heavenly to the earthly nature was a means to an end, which was to be accomplished when he became a man. In order to take this great step, it was necessary for him to have absolute confidence that the Father would not wish him to do anything which would be to his injury, but to the contrary, something which would do him good. So great was his faith in the Father that he wished to do the Father's will at any cost.

The first step toward the achievement of the Father's will was the taking of a nature lower than any on the spirit plane —the human. Then, being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself unto death, even the death of the cross. (Phil. 2:8) He did not humble himself before he became a man, but afterwards. As a boy he inquired of the Doctors of the Law what time would be appropriate for him to enter upon his ministry. Evidently satisfied by his investigation that there was nothing to be done at that time, he returned to his home with his mother and her husband, and was subject to them until he was thirty years old.—Luke 2:51.

At thirty years of age, Jesus offered himself at Jordan where he went for no other purpose than to make his consecration. He knew that he had come into the world to be man's Redeemer; ;that God's will concerning his work of redemption was written in the types and shadows of the Scriptures, and that this will was altogether outside of the moral part of the law, for it was not obligatory on one who would keep the law. He also knew that to do this work of redemption he must present himself in sacrifice. (Psa. 50:5) Gladly he offered himself, saying, "Lo, I come . . . to do thy will, O my God."

ONLY ONE PART OF THE REDEMPTION WORK YET ACCOMPLISHED

In the Atonement day offering, our Lord's consecration is pictured by the High Priest when he smote the bullock and killed it. Here we have in the type a picture of our Lord, who was represented by both bullock and priest. The new mind, the new will, the new creature, offered up the flesh. It was not that he offered up himself as man's Redeemer, he presented himself a sacrifice—not to mankind, not to Satan, not to the world, but unto God. He was so loyal that he was ready to sacrifice to the Father everything which he possessed; he was permitted to prove his loyalty and faithfulness even unto death.

As a result of his obedience unto death, even the shameful death of the cross, our Lord was raised from the dead and given the very highest nature—the divine. In due time he will be permitted to offer the merit of his sacrifice as a ransom-price for the sins of the whole world, and thus he will become the world's Redeemer.

This word Redeemer is quite broad. It signifies one who obtains control of something and brings it back to a former condition in a legal and satisfactory manner. Our Lord began to do this work. He has accomplished the first part, which in due time will become a satisfactory price for the sins of the world. He has already been highly exalted and thus qualified for the great office of Mediator between God and men. He is waiting merely until the members of his body be joined to him and made participators of his glory, and then the work of restitution for mankind will begin.

Our Lord will be a thousand years in doing the second part of this work of redeeming. At the close of the thousand years the work will have been finished. Now he is the Redeemer, the Restorer, not because he has done the work, but because he has the power and authority to do it. At the close of the thousand years he will be the one who will have accomplished this work of restitution, and the name Redeemer will be his forever, even though the work of redeeming will be in the past.

Nothing in the Scriptures indicates how clearly our Lord understood the terms and conditions upon which he would please the Father after coming into the world. We are, therefore, not to dogmatize on the subject. But it is probable that he did not know all the experiences through which he would pass while in the flesh, and that some of these were afterwards revealed to him, as we read that when after his baptism he came up out of the water, the heavens—the higher things, the spiritual—were opened to him. (Matt. 3:16) Thenceforth he was able to appreciate the deeper features of God's plan.

ALL THINGS ARE POSSIBLE

MARK 9:14-29.—DECEMBER 1.

"And Jesus said unto him, If thou canst believe; all things are possible to him that believeth."—Mark 9:23.

When Jesus and the three favored apostles came down from the Mount of Transfiguration, where they had been enjoying the vision of coming glory, they found the other nine apostles at the foot of the mountain surrounded by a multitude. They had made several inefficacious attempts to cast out a demon from a boy whose father had brought him for the purpose.

So it is with some of the Lord's people; occasionally by faith they go up into the mountain, into the kingdom; by faith they see the glory of the Lord revealed, and hear afresh that they must suffer with the Lord if they would enter into his glory. Then, coming down from the exalted heights of contemplation of things glorious, they face the realities of the present time—the adversary is in possession of the world still; many are his slaves and dupes; no earthly power seems sufficient to cast him out; they are back with the remainder of the church. But if the Master be with them, victory will ultimately be achieved.

This case was one of occasional obsession by an evil spirit, whereas many of the others were continuous. The evil spirit came into this boy at times, causing him to have a fit, to froth at the mouth, to wallow in the mire, sometimes striving to throw him into the fire or into the water, or otherwise destroy him. The parents had brought the child to Jesus for a cure; in his absence they sought the nine apostles remaining, but their endeavors were fruitless; they could not cast out this spirit.

The unsuccessful disciples were perplexed; never before had the Master's name failed to be respected by the demons. The Scribes also were harassing them with questions, when Jesus and the other three appeared coming down the mountain. The multitude hailed Jesus and flocked to him, but he came promptly to the relief of the apostles and inquired the nature of their trouble. The father interposed and explained: "I have brought my son, who is possessed of a dumb spirit; and whenever it takes hold upon him it dashes him down and he foameth and grindeth his teeth and pineth away; and I spake to thy disciples that they should cast it out, and they were not able."

And Jesus answered, "O faithless generation! How long shall I be with you? How long shall I bear with you? Bring the boy to me." And they brought him, and immediately the spirit caused him to fall to the ground, wallowing and foaming. Jesus questioned how long he had been thus. The father answered, "From a child," and that often the spirit attempted to cast the boy into the fire or into the water to destroy him; "But if thou canst do anything, have compassion on us and help us."

"TO HIM THAT BELIEVETH"

Jesus replied, "If thou canst believe; all things are possible to him that believeth." How great stress the Lord lays everywhere upon the exercise of faith in the divine power! "Without faith it is impossible to please God." Those who cannot exercise the faith cannot have the blessing which others may have who do exercise faith; and our blessings increase in proportion as we will exercise our faith. Thus the Lord puts a premium upon this element of character, and makes it essential to his favor.

This does not imply that people who cannot now exercise faith will never get any blessing. On the contrary, while the Lord has given certain exceeding great and precious promises to those who can believe and who do believe, and who follow their belief with obedience to the extent of their ability, he has also promised that by and by, during Messiah's kingdom, the way of faith and obedience will be made so plain, so simple, that all will be able to follow it and to gain a reward—but a lesser reward than that now extended to those who can and do exercise faith and obedience.

The reason for this is manifest. God is now seeking a special class of specially faithful and obedient children, to be heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Jesus in His glorious Messianic kingdom. He is now selecting the class which by and by he will use in bestowing his blessing world-wide; and he desires that in this class shall be only such as can exercise absolute faith in him. Hence, now, God's rule for dealing with the church is, "According to thy faith be it unto thee."

And in this and other miracles the Lord required faith seemingly as the condition of the healing. He thus manifested forth his coming glory and the power of his kingdom. During the kingdom reign there will be such manifestations of divine power, and such assistance given to those willing to exercise faith, that all may profit thereby and experience the healings of their flesh and the casting out of every power of Satan and sin.

The poor father realized from Jesus' words that the difficulty rested with him, that he must exercise faith else his son could not be recovered. With tears he cried out, "Lord, I do believe; Help thou mine unbelief!" His faith got its reward. Jesus commanded the evil spirit to come out of the boy, and enter no more into him. This last was the special point of this cure. The evil spirit had frequently left the boy, but only to return. The Lord's command was that he should leave and never return.

It may be wondered why the Master permitted the evil spirit to tear the boy and cause him pain, etc., in leaving him. If he had power to cast him out, he also undoubtedly had power to control the manner of his coming out. We can only surmise therefore that Jesus, on this and other occasions, allowed the evil spirit a measure of liberty in the method of leaving the victims, and that this was for the very purpose of demonstrating how malicious and evil the spirit was which had control; and thus the miracle was the more clearly seen, and thus the more would the Lord be praised by those interested.

"MANY SAID, 'HE IS DEAD'"

The boy was left in an apparently dead condition, but Jesus took him by the hand and raised him up. The lesson for us in this is that it is not only that the adversary and his power be cast out of humanity and from control, which the poor world needs, but they need divine aid, the hand of divine power, for their uplift out of the mire of sin and death. According to the Scriptures, we are near the time when Satan will be bound, when all the influences of evil amongst humanity will be restrained. According to the Scriptures, also, this binding of Satan will be accomplished in a great "time of trouble such as never was since there was a nation," and humanity will be left in an almost dead condition. The pride, the hopes, the ambition of men will perish in that awful trouble time, but the Master will be present in kingdom power to uplift them.

Messiah's kingdom will not only bind the adversary and forbid him to re-enter humanity and interfere with their affairs, but the power of the kingdom will for a thousand years do an uplifting work amongst the fallen and degraded members of our race, lifting them up, up, up, until they will be fully up to the divine standard, as represented in Father Adam—from which condition he originally fell through disobedience ,and return to which condition has been secured for all through the merit of Jesus' sacrifice accomplished at Calvary.

The disciples asked Jesus why they could not cast out this demon. And so God's people many a time have asked themselves, Why cannot we do more than we are doing in the way of opposing Satan and sin, and their reign of evil? The answer of Jesus is applicable here as well as there: "This kind cometh not out save by fasting and prayer." Undoubtedly God's people could accomplish much more in their own conflicts with sin and Satan, and in helping others to get free from the power of sin, if we would always exercise full faith in the Lord, and if we would continually live more in the spirit and less according to the flesh. This would mean fasting, or self-denial, and prayer, or fellowship with God. To him who believeth, every blessing belongs which God has promised to his faithful ones, but we have the conditions expressed elsewhere by Jesus: "If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you."

"QUENCH NOT THE SPIRIT"

1 Thess. 5:19.

In the Scriptures light is used as a symbol of the illuminating power of the holy Spirit. The Spirit of God is symbolized, not only by the oil with which the priests were anointed and which represented the indwelling power of the Spirit, but also by the light of the golden candlestick which stood in the Holy. After we had been favored with the knowledge of the Truth and had consecrated ourselves, the Lord accepted our consecration and gave us the holy Spirit, which became the illuminating power of our hearts. All down the Gospel age the church has been the light of the world. This our Lord intimated would be true when he said to his disciples on one occasion, "Ye are the light of the world."—Matt. 5:14.

As there are various ways by which a light may be extinguished, so there are different means by which this light of the holy Spirit may be quenched in us. A light will go out if the supply of oil or gas which feeds it be cut off, or if the oxygen of the air be shut off from it, whether because the supply is exhausted or because something is placed over the light to extinguish it. So it is with us. The light of the Spirit may be permitted to die out for want of replenishing, or it may be quenched by contact with some outside force.

In order to have the holy Spirit in large measure, we must keep near to the Lord; for if we get away from him, the light will go out. If we neglect the privilege of prayer or of study of the Scriptures or of fellowship with the Lord through failure to think of him, the illumination of the Spirit will grow dim. On the other hand, it will become brighter in proportion to our realization of our own imperfections and to the degree of our consecration to the Lord. This we manifest by the zeal with which we study his will as expressed in his Word, and with which we practice that will in the affairs of life. These are the means by which we may supply the oil to keep our light burning brightly. But while we are endeavoring to do this, we must see to it that we do not come into contact with anything which will tend to extinguish the flame of sacred love in our hearts.

The world, the flesh and the devil are all in opposition to the light of the holy Spirit. To whatever extent they are brought into contact with the light, to that extent they smother it. If the spirit of worldliness come into our hearts, it will extinguish the light of the holy Spirit. If the spirit of selfishness or thoughtlessness enter our hearts, it will cause the light to grow dim and finally to die out. Weariness in well-doing will produce the same result. If we indulge in pleasures of the flesh, these will tend to quench the Spirit. Sinful pleasures should, of course, be shunned by everybody. But there are pleasures which are not sinful and which are proper enough for the natural man. Yet to whatever extent the consecrated indulge in these and thus gratify the longings of the flesh, proportionately the new nature will suffer.

Christian fellowship is thought to be one of the very best aids to maintaining the light of the Spirit. Yet even in this there is a danger-line which is not always recognized and which, if crossed, will produce the opposite effect. A visit to the seashore and a bath in the ocean may in some cases be very profitable; but in others it may be carried to such an extent that it becomes dangerous to the new nature. Those who become weary in well-doing are usually those who have found something attractive in another direction to take their attention away from the things of the Spirit.

ACCURATE KNOWLEDGE OF THE PLAN MOST ESSENTIAL

Amongst the various arrangements which God has made for the new creatures in Christ is the assembling of themselves together in order to maintain their light and let it shine. The Apostle Paul exhorts the church not to forget the assembling together wherever it is possible to do so. (Heb. 10:25) Where the assembling is not possible, the Lord makes up for the lack in some other way; and so we sometimes find a dear brother or sister who has not had the opportunity to meet with others in the truth, but who seems to be very clear and to have a deep appreciation of the Lord's plan. Not having the privilege of fellowship with others, such a one has done so much the more reading and studying.

Those who have this opportunity for fellowship and who do not appreciate it, seem to be in a very unsatisfactory condition. In such cases, the oil is not burning brightly, else that one would delight to be with fellow-pilgrims in the same way,

marching toward the same goal. We should be as careful of our spiritual condition as of our physical. If we have a bad taste in our mouth and no appetite, we conclude that we are not well; and if we do not care to go to meetings, we may know that we are not in good spiritual health. When we find that we have not the desire to meet with others of "like precious faith," it is an indication that we should go to the Great Physi cian, that he may help us.

In some cases, however, the individual would do better not to go to meeting at first, but to read and study for awhile. Many have been hindered in their spiritual growth by getting a smattering of the truth and then attending meetings. Such become stumbling-stones to themselves and to others. If they have not the time to read as well as to attend meetings, it would be better to read until they have become established, and then to assemble with others of like precious faith.

Many, even of those who are leading classes, are not so clear in the truth as would be desirable. Some of these seem not to know what they are talking about, although they think that they do. There are various means by which one may redeem the time for study. One may take a book with him and read while on the car, going to and from his daily task. We know a dear brother who read the entire six volumes in this way.

The right course is to exercise the spirit of a sound mind on this subject, as well as on others. Our first thought should be for the glory of God; our second, for our own profit; our third, for the benefit of others. In this matter we owe it to ourselves to put ourselves first; for if we fit ourselves for service, we then have larger opportunity for helping others. Here self comes first, by divine command—"Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness"; "This is the will of God [concerning you], even your sanctification."—Matt. 6:33; 1 Thess. 4:3.

As each one comes to know for himself after receiving the holy Spirit, he is authorized to teach what he has learned for himself. So we may all be taught of God and be used in teaching others, in proportion as we learn the lessons and apply them to our own hearts. Each one's conscience should decide for him what is to the glory of God in respect to attending meet ings.

A flame might be revived, even after having been wholly extinguished. Many of us have seen a candle extinguished, and yet there was a bright, warm core which a quick breath of air might rekindle. So with us. There might be something in our lives to extinguish the flame, but the light would not go entirely out; the breath of the Lord might rekindle it. We have seen people who apparently had been zealous for the Lord, but who seemed to lose their love and zeal; but later it has been rekindled. In other cases, the light has seemed to die out altogether. We should ever be on guard lest we allow anything to dim or to extinguish our love for the Lord, for the truth or for holiness and Christ-likeness.

GREATEST IN THE KINGDOM

MATTHEW 18:1-14.—DECEMBER 8.

"In heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father."—V. 10.

Perhaps it was the fact that Peter, James and John had been favored more than the others on several occasions that led to the query which opens today's study: "Who, then, is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?" They knew, of course, as St. Paul declares, that the Heavenly Father is above all, and that next to Him is our Lord Jesus Christ. "To us there is one God, the Father, of whom are all things; and one Lord, Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him." What the disciples wished to know was, which of them would be greatest, most influential, in Messiah's kingdom, next to himself.

Jesus, calling to him a little child, set him in the midst of them and said, "Verily I say unto you, except ye turn [from this spirit of self-seeking which your question implies] and become as little children, ye shall in no wise enter into the kingdom of heaven"—you will have no part in it, you will not be fit. Whoever would be greatest in the kingdom of heaven should therefore become as humble as this little child.

A little child, unsophisticated, is ready to acknowledge its lack of wisdom. It asks questions, a thousand a day, perhaps as many as that in an hour; it seeks instruction; it does not profess and boast wisdom or knowledge—it is candid, it is truthful. It is in later years that it learns from its parents and others, untruthfulness, pride, bombast and various qualities which it did not possess at first. It may have possessed the disposition to pride and arrogance and haughtiness, etc., by heredity, but at first it was guileless, and "as a little child."

The Master's lesson is that whoever would become a child of God and be taught of God, and be eventually developed as a child of God, for the glorious position in the kingdom to which we were called, must become childlike—must turn away from all pride, from selfish ambitions and hypocrisies and pretentions. They must confess their littleness and ignorance, and go humbly to the Lord for the necessary instruction.

Any who refuse to adopt this proper, childlike spirit will thus be refused the opportunities of the kingdom, for God will have none others—none others can be taught of God, they will not learn the lessons necessary, under the arrangements of this present time. Here then is the standard of simplicity and artlessness which the Lord's people should adopt and should continue to allow to control them, regardless of their years and experiences. "Now we know in part"; we are dependent upon our Father and his instructions. We have entered the School of Christ, our Elder Brother; he is our Instructor; we must learn of him, and to learn we must be in this proper, childlike attitude of mind.

"ONE SUCH LITTLE CHILD"

We are not to understand that little children, however guileless, are members of Christ's kingdom class, nor that the dear little ones dying in infancy will be members thereof. The Lord is seeking for mature men and women, who have a childlikeness of mind, a readiness to receive the Heavenly Father's message, and who in gladness and simplicity of heart accept it. "Whoso shall receive one such little child in my name, receiveth me"; whoever are my disciples are privileged to be God's little children, and thus to be my younger brothers; whoever will receive one such will be receiving me. "Whosoever shall offend," or injure, "one of these little ones that believe in me, it were better for him if a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were sunk in the depths of the sea."

If some one were thus drowned in the sea, it would indeed terminate his present life, but it would not at all endanger or influence his future life. A future life, by a Restitution awakening, is assured to Adam and every member of his race. Neither drowning nor any other form of death could possibly interfere with it. But he who would injure one of the Lord's little ones would thereby come under such a measure of divine displeasure that it would affect his future interests beyond the grave, beyond his awakening. He would be held responsible for his deeds, even in the next life, in proportion as he realized what he was doing when he injured the Lord's saints.

The Lord declares that his faithful ones are as precious to him as the apple of his eye, and that all their interests are subject to divine supervision. He will allow nothing to happen to these; troubles permitted to come upon them will be only such as the Lord has foreseen and is able to make work out some blessing in connection with their preparation for the kingdom. But even this fact will not excuse wilfulness on the part of those who do evil to the members of the body of Jesus.

We remember the persecution of the saints by Saul of Tarsus. We remember Jesus said to him, "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?" He answered, "Who art thou, Lord?" And Jesus replied, "I am Jesus, whom thou persecutest." In persecuting the saints Saul of Tarsus had been persecuting Jesus, but because he did it ignorantly God had mercy upon him. Doubtless many saints from Jesus' day down have been persecuted ignorantly, and the Lord will have mercy upon those persecutors; but some of the persecutors have had such light, such knowledge, as to make them responsible; and it is of this class that our lesson speaks. Our Lord added a warning: "Woe unto the world because of offenses! It must needs be that offenses come; but woe to that man by whom the offense cometh."

CUT OFF HAND OR FOOT

Here the Master brought in a saying which has perplexed many. "If thy foot cause thee to stumble, cut it off, and cast it from thee; it is better to enter life maimed, or halt, than having two hands or two feet to be cast into everlasting fire. If thine eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee; it is better to enter into life with one eye, than that having two eyes thou be cast into Gehenna fire."

Those who fail to remember that Jesus spake to the people in parables, and never without a parable, will be liable to stumble over these words of his. His teaching is this: If you have anything in your make-up dear to you as a right hand or a foot of an eye, that is likely to cause you to stumble and fail to enter the kingdom, you would better cut off that ten-

dency, no matter what it costs, no matter how precious, no matter how great a hold it may have upon the very tendrils of your life. Would it not be better to enter into life than to go into Gehenna fire, that is, destruction, the second death? Surely this is true. Having put our hands to the plow, having even become followers of Jesus, we must either go on and be accepted as conquerors, or must perish.

There will, of course, be none in the kingdom with but one eye, but the illustration is the same. If it should cost us the cutting off of some of our members, it would surely pay us to gain the eternal life in glory, even thus maimed, rather than to take the consequences of the second death, utter extinction. The lesson is that having begun as followers of Christ, and entered upon the contract and received a part of the reward, the holy Spirit, the divine favor, we cannot back out of the contract; we must go on to everlasting life or to everlasting death.

How careful the Lord's people should be not to stumble one another, even one of the least of the little ones who has accepted of Jesus and become his follower!—is the lesson. To illustrate it, Jesus suggested that any shepherd losing one of his sheep would leave all the others to go and seek that one; and he rejoices specially at its recovery. So we, the followers of Jesus, should be careful not to stumble each other, but rather to remember that we are all sheep under the great Shepherd, our Heavenly Father, and the great Under Shepherd, our Heavenly Lord, and that he has the spirit of loving interest and care which would go after the straying sheep, and that we should have this same spirit; and possessing this spirit, we would be very careful indeed not to stumble or hinder even the least of the Lord's followers.

All the Lord's true followers are God's "little ones," and are subject to special divine supervision, represented in our text as angel care. The messengers who have guarded over the lives of God's saintly few always have access to the Heavenly Father's presence, to make known the necessities of those whom they represent, for divine power is ever on the alert for the protection of these. Oh, how blessed the privilege of being children of God. Oh, how wise to continue so little, so humble, so childlike, as to abide in his love, and to be enabled to learn the necessary lessons, and be ultimately received with Messiah in his kingdom honor and glory!

MORE ELDERS—MORE WORK

Some of the Bible Students' classes are doing excellent service in the Class Extension work and, as a matter of course, report regularly. Often the attendance at the Extension meetings is good. Frequently the first three meetings lead up to the succeeding three, and are then followed by the establishment of new classes. We recommend that wherever possible these new classes have their local meetings on some week night, and that they endeavor to congregate with the Central class at least Sundays.

We have been surprised that some large classes containing numerous brethren well qualified for the work are doing little or nothing in Class Extension. We have been trying to think out the cause of this apparent lack of zeal in the harvest work. Knowing the dear friends to be zealous, knowing that talent in their midst is lying dormant, we have been forced to the conclusion which we are about to present: that is, that the brethren who are capable of Class Extension work in such classes are too modest to suggest the work, lest it should seem that they are trying to have the class elect them to the eldership and authorize them to proceed with the Extension work. Modesty is always an excellent quality; but it must be especially hard for dear brethren of some ability to abstain from proclaiming the good tidings—to abstain from going out and starting little meetings themselves.

There surely are classes deficient in material for Class Extension—classes which need all the brethren of any ability in their midst. But there are other classes which need to wake up, to take note of brethren having some ability, and to encourage them to use their time and strength in the Class Extension work. We urge, therefore, that the classes regard as available assets the material which they possess, and seek to glorify the Lord in the use of these assets.

In cases where brethren possessed of ability to give Chart Talks see opportunities for Class Extension, and are financially able to manage the matter themselves, we advise that they proceed to hold meetings. We recommend, however, that they first mention the matter to the class, so that, if possible, co-operation on the part of all may be secured, and that all may join in a good work and in the resultant joys and blessings of service.

SERMONS IN THE NEWSPAPERS

Under God's providence a great work is being carried on through the newspapers; and the Gospel is being presented to millions who never attend meetings for divine worship. Some of these are discouraged Christians who lost their faith in human creeds and systems of men and found no footing for their faith in the Bible because they did not understand it. How blessed that God has such an arrangement by which the good tidings may reach those otherwise outside any general opportunity for hearing it!

But alas, some Christians have a bitter and sectarian spirit! The fact that many of the churches have smaller congregations as a result of loss of faith years ago makes their votaries angry that the message should be heard outside the churches. Some of these unreasonable zealots are doing all they know how to do to hinder the message from going to the outsiders through the newspapers. Oh, why do they not rejoice that the Gospel is being preached to the poor, to the outsiders, to the publicans and sinners!

Under these circumstances it behooves all of us to encourage the editors of the newspapers publishing the sermons. They should know that their work is appreciated. Letters sent to them should be moderate and kind. They are not publishing the sermons because of any personal interest in them, but merely because the public are reading them. Let us hold up their hands, not only encouraging them with postcards, assuring them of appreciation of the sermons and of the good work they thereby assist in, but let us also give to such papers a financial encouragement through subscriptions.

The Watch Tower Office frequently has special agents' rates for newspapers. In any event it knows quite well which papers would most need a little encouragement in the way of new subscriptions. Subscriptions sent to us will be wisely used. Many of our readers doubtless can afford to take several papers, and, after reading these, to mark the sermons and to use them as tracts amongst their friends and neighbors. Do it now before you forget it!

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IN DREAMLESS SLEEP DEAD AWAIT CHRIST'S RETURN

"If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you unto myself, that where I am there ye may be also."—John 14:3.

The error of supposing that men are alive when they are dead lies close to the foundation of every theological error the world over. We have all erred in taking the guess of Plato instead of the Word of God, and we can get rid of our difficulties and theological entanglements only by retracing our steps. Notwithstanding all that we have said and written, calling attention to the words of the Scriptures, the question arises, Do you mean to tell us that our friends do not go to heaven immediately when they die?

That is exactly what we are endeavoring to demonstrate to be the teaching of the Bible. The Bible alone, of all religious books, teaches that a dead man is dead, and knows nothing, and that his only hope is in the divine arrangement through Christ, by a resurrection of the dead—"both of the just and unjust."—Acts 24:15.

When we remember that, according to nearly all the religious creeds and theories of the world, 999 out of every thousand pass immediately at death into most horrible sufferings, one would think that all would be glad to promtly accept the Bible testimony, that death is a dreamless sleep until the resurrection awakening. Why anyone should prefer to think his friends and neighbors and the heathen millions are suffer-

ing torture, rather than to think of them as being asleep, is beyond our comprehension.

The fact probably is that selfishness has such a hold upon the masses that they care and think little respecting others than their own relatives and friends; and the same selfishness inclines them, with infatuation, to believe that they and their relatives, though no better than the rest of mankind, are special favorites in heaven, and will be granted the reward of the saints, however unsaintly their lives may have been. Some one has suggested that the ideal prayer for such is:

"God bless me and my wife,
My son John and his wife;
Us four, and no more."

In harmony with this we find that when death invades a family circle this selfish egotism assumes that the deceased is acceptable to God as a saint, and wafted immediately to heavenly bliss—regardless of how unsaintly had been the life and how little of the spirit of Christ was ever manifested. The deception is reinforced by the Christian ministers called to conduct the funeral service. Whatever he may read from the Bible to the effect that, if there be no resurrection, they that have fallen asleep have perished, his sermon is sure to give the inference that the deceased needs no resurrection, because he has not died, but has merely been transferred from a lower plane of life to a higher one.

Proof of this is not given and not asked. The proof is not given because there is no Scriptural proof to give. It is not asked because the people are not sufficiently intelligent on religious subjects to demand a reason and a proof of what is presented to them. The remedy for all this will come when we become more intelligent, more reasoning. No minister of Christ should be abashed to be asked the reason for his faith. St. Peter exhorted that every Christian should be so thoroughly informed respecting the divine message as to be able to give a reason to whoever would ask concerning his own faith and his presentations to others.

Here note our text. In it the Master says not a word about our going to him, but quite the contrary—that he will come and receive us unto himself. This is in full accord with the teaching of the apostles. Do they not tell that at the second coming of Christ the resurrection of the church will be the first item in order; that then that which was sown in weakness will be raised in power; that sown in dishonor will be raised in glory; that sown an animal body will be raised a spirit body; and that so we shall ever be with the Lord? Do they not tell us that this will be an instantaneous change? Is it not styled an awakening from the sleep of death?

Hearken to St. Paul: "Behold, I show you a mystery; we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump (seventh trumpet); for the trumpet shall sound," "and the dead in Christ shall rise first; then we which are alive and remain shall be caught away together to a meeting with the Lord in the air." (1 Cor. 15:51; 1 Thess. 4:16, 17) How plain, how simple! That will be the first meeting of the church with her Lord. All of her members dying before that time will "sleep," while those dying since that time will not need to sleep and wait for the glorious change. But, says one, does not the second coming of Christ take place whenever his holy ones die? Does he not immediately come to receive them unto himself?

Surely only a very lame theory could seek to bolster itself up by such a perversion of the Scriptures. If Christ were to come every time one of his saintly ones dies, would it not mean many comings instead of merely a second coming? And even if his faithful were very few indeed, does it not seem that this would keep the Redeemer busy coming and departing every few minutes?

Only crass ignorance of the Bible could excuse any such misapplication of its teachings. Not merely one statement of the Scripture bears upon this subject, but hundreds of statements of Scripture, by Jesus and the apostles; and all these contradict any such thought.

"NO MAN HATH ASCENDED TO HEAVEN"

Hearken to Jesus' words, "No man hath ascended up to heaven." (John 3:13) Only the Son of Man has ever been in heaven. He has ascended up where he was before, with additional glory and honor. He is now preparing a place for his bride class and preparing the bride class for the place—the place of honor at his own right hand. He is overseeing her experiences and causing all things to work together for her good, that she at his second coming may be prepared and be accepted as his bride and granted a share in his glory, honor and immortality.

It is in full harmony with this that a little later on the Great Teacher declared that all the dead are in the grave, and that at his second advent he will first call forth his faithful ones to the perfection of life; and later call forth the remainder of mankind, not as yet found worthy of life, that they may have an opportunity, a testing as respects their worthiness or unworthiness of everlasting life on the human plane.

Hear his assurance again respecting his faithful ones—that they shall share in his resurrection, the chief resurrection, to glory, honor, immortality, on the spirit plane. He said, "Blessed and holy are all they that have part in the first resurrection; they shall be priests unto God and Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years."—Rev. 20:6.

Be it noted that in all these assurances the church is spoken of as a class, all of whom will enter into glory together, at Christ's second coming, and not separately, as each may die. True, each has an individual trial or testing to determine whether or not he or she will be accounted worthy, or fitted for a place in the glorious body of Christ, in the glorious bride company; but the statement is repeatedly made that we shall be glorified together, that we shall have part in the one resurrection.

"DAVID NOT ASCENDED TO HEAVEN"

In full accord with all the foregoing is St. Peter's statement on the day of Pentecost: "For David is not ascended into the heavens"; "his sepulchre is with us unto this day." (Acts 2:34, 29.) St. Peter's words imply that if King David had ascended to heaven he would have no sepulchre on earth. Similarly, we might say of all of the prophets, and of all other persons that, if once they ascended to the heavenly plane, they could not be said to have any sepulchre on earth, for the very thought connected with the word sepulchre is that of a personality awaiting a resurrection, awaiting deliverance from the state and condition of death. So the Scriptures always refer, not to a resurrection of the living, which would be an absurdity, but to a resurrection of the dead.

Note the connection in which the Apostle Peter uses this expression: "David is not ascended into the heavens." He had just called attention to the fact that David prophesied of the resurrection of Jesus. In the prophecy he personated Jesus, and said, "Thou will not leave my soul in sheol (hades), nor suffer thine holy one to see corruption." (V. 27) St .Peter argues that this was not true of David, that he did see corruption, that his soul was left in sheol, and is still left there, and will not be reclaimed until Messiah, in the resurrection morning, shall call him forth.

"BE WITH ME IN PARADISE"

But, says some one, did not the dying thief go with Jesus to Paradise the very day in which they both died? And if so, does not this prove that all in harmony with God go to heaven when they die, whatever may be the condition of others in death?

No, we have made a stupid blunder and misinterpretation of our Redeemer's dying words to the thief. The wrong thought being in our minds we misinterpreted in harmony therewith. And our interpretation has done an immense amount of harm. Thousands of people have been encouraged to continue a life of sin, trusting that with their dying breath they may have the opportunity of saying, "God be merciful to me," and then be immediately ushered into glory, honor and immortality, as joint-heirs with the Savior, and in as honorable a station as those who "have fought to win the prize, and sailed through bloody seas" of trial and persecution and self-denial.

What a travesty of justice to suppose such an application of this principle! For instance, two ungodly persons quarrel. Both draw revolvers and fire; one dies instantly; the other, the worse of the two, lives a moment, in which he says, "God, be merciful to me." Then, theoretically, he passes into glory, while his victim, not having the opportunity for a cry for mercy, we are told by the same theory, is doomed to endless torture.

Note the circumstance. (Luke 23:39-43.) Jesus hung between two thieves, one of whom joined with the multitude in railing at him as an imposter, crying out, "Yes if you be the Christ, save yourself and us from death." The other, of better heart, honestly admitted his own guilt and the guilt of his comrade, but defended Jesus, declaring that he was innocent. Following this, he addressed Jesus. We paraphrase his words: "Lord, I have defended you against an unjust attack; remember this poor thief if you ever have an opportunity to do a kindness to me in return. I heard you before Pilate say that you have a kingdom, but not of this age; some heavenly kingdom, I therefore presume. I know little about such matters, but from what I have seen of you I can well surmise you king of such a kingdom. My request is, "Remember me, when thou comest into thy kingdom."

To this Jesus replied, "Verily, verily (so be it, so be it, as you have asked)—verily, I say unto thee this day (this dark day, in which it would appear that I have not a friend in

heaven or on earth—this dark day in which I am crucified as a malefactor, a falsifier and a blasphemer—I say unto thee this day), Thou shalt be with me in Paradise."

On the day of their dying all three went to hades, to sheol, to the tomb, to the state of the dead. The two thieves still remain there, and are amongst those mentioned by the Prophet Daniel when he refers to those "who sleep in the dust of the earth," who will come forth in the resurrection morning. (Daniel 12:2.) But Jesus arose from sheol, from hades, from the tomb, from the state of death, on the third day. He had not been to Paradise, for Paradise is not even yet in existence. he had not been to heaven, for he had been dead. Let us hear his own words to Mary on the morning of his resurrection: "I have not yet ascended * * * to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God." (John 20:17) Could anything be plainer, simpler, more harmonious?

"DEPART AND BE WITH CHRIST"

Ah, says one, I have great faith in St. Paul, and I remember his words: "I am in a strait between two things; having a desire to depart and to be with Christ, which is far better." (Phil. 1:23) If St. Paul expected to depart and be with Christ, why is it not reasonable to suppose that he did so, and that all others, at least of the saintly, at death so depart and pass at once into the presence and fellowship of Jesus?

Yet such a misunderstanding of St. Paul's words and thoughts are excusable in view of the general trend of Christian thought on this subject for centuries, and in view of the error made in this case by the translators. We are not faulting the translators, because they had the erroneous thought firmly imbedded in their minds and presumably were trying to make the apostle here say what they conscientiously thought he ought to say.

But what we are interested in knowing is, What did he say on the subject?

Let us read the apostle's words critically. He was in a strait between two things—whether he would prefer to live and suffer further for the truth's sake, and assist the brethren, or whether he would prefer to die and rest from his labors. Between these two positions he had no choice. But there was a third thing—and if this had been a possibility he would have had no difficulty in deciding—he had a real, positive desire respecting it; neither of the things which were possible to him would have stood in comparison at all, this third thing would have been so desirable.

Now what was this third thing? It was not to live and suffer and help the brethren, nor was it to die and be at rest from his labors. The third thing, according to a literal translation, is expressed thus: "I have a desire for the returning, and being with Christ, which is far better"—far better than either living under the present trying conditions or dying, sleeping, resting and waiting for the kingdom.

But, says one, by what authority do you render the word depart by a word of very opposite meaning, namely return? We answer that we give this rendering on the authority of the Greek text. The Greek word is analusai; it is found in one other place in the Bible, and there it is rendered return. In this other case there can be no question as to the proper translation.—See Luke 12:36.

Let us, then, dear fellow-Christian, turn from the follies of the dark ages and take the inspired words of Jesus, the apostles and prophets, and have, indeed, "beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for the spirit of heaviness," in respect to the understanding of the heavenly Father's program. Thus we will find fulfilled in us more and more the Master's prayer: "Sanctify them through thy truth; thy word is truth."

CONSECRATION THE NORMAL ATTITUDE FOR GOD'S INTELLIGENT CREATURES

"The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned."—1 Cor. 2:14.

By the expression "natural man" we understand the Scriptures to mean all who have not experienced a change of nature in the begetting of the holy Spirit. All mankind, including Adam himself, are natural men. Even a perfect human being cannot receive the deep spiritual truths which God reveals to his consecrated children through the holy Spirit.

Whoever is desirous of being in harmony with God and is endeavoring to become so, even though he be not justified, is looking forward to full justification. If he continue in this course, he will eventually become justified—if not at the present time, then during Messiah's reign. But in this age, none can attain to full justification except by faith in the blood of Christ, which leads its possessor to make complete consecration of himself to God, by the intervention of our Lord Jesus as Advocate, who imputes to him a sufficiency of his merit to make up for his deficiency.

Since our Lord imputes his merit only to those who make a full consecration of themselves, one who merely believes in the Savior and wishes to do right, cannot at this time enter into full peace with God. He receives only a measure of peace and justification; for those alone who are fully absolved from sin and presented by the Advocate can be accepted by the Father—these alone are fully justified in the Father's sight.

Some speak of the sanctified as if these were no longer justified. The fact is that only the sanctified can be said to be fully justified; and they must maintain their justification with God, else they could never make their calling and election sure.

It is very important to observe the sharp outlines and distinctions which the Scriptures establish. According to these outlines, the holy Spirit is given only in a very special manner, during a very special age, for a very special purpose. The distinction is absolute and positive in every sense of the word. Only those begotten of the Father have his Spirit, which is the Spirt of the Son; and those alone who have the Spirit are begotten to the new nature.

GOOD TRAITS OF CHARACTER NOT A PROOF OF CONSECRATION

In times past we did not clearly distinguish the Lord's people from the world. Whenever we met a man with kind, gentle manners, whether an infidel, a Brahman, a Mohammedan, a Presbyterian, a Methodist or merely one of the world, we said to ourselves, "Here is a man who has the Spirit of the Lord." Then, we did not know what we were talking about; now, we can recognize the difference. We are certainly glad to acknowledge good trials of character in heathen as well as Christians, but we are not to accept gentleness and kindness of manner as evidence that their possessor has the holy Spirit.

We have all seen people who have very proper sentiments of justice on some subjects, who are yet manifestly not God's people, begotten of the holy Spirit. Such persons are usually fine characters. Nevertheless, their conscientiousness causes them to admit that they are sinners and have need of divine forgiveness. We are glad that there are such people, and we should encourage rather than discourage them.

The explanation of this condition of affairs is that these fine characters are not so fallen as some others. God made man in his own image and likeness. With the fall of man came the impairment of that godlike disposition, but the image of God is not altogether lost. For our part, we wish to show that our Redeemer is the only channel for that forgiveness, the need of which they recognize, and that the only condition of their full acceptance with God is the entire consecration of all that they possess to the service of the Lord.

On one occasion our Lord said, "No man can come unto me, except the Father which sent me draw him." (John 6:44.) No one will receive the holy Spirit without having been drawn to Christ, but some may be drawn without receiving the holy Spirit. Possibly in these persons that endowment which God gave to Adam and pronounced "very good" has been less impaired by the fall than it has been in others. Such naturally desire to have God's approval and the blessings which he is willing to give to those who seek him.

Having this disposition, such persons are said to be drawn to God. But the Father points them to the Son, through the knowledge of simple truths. For instance, they may be influenced through hearing a hymn sung; such as,

> "There is a fountain filled with blood,
> Drawn from Immanuel's veins;
> And sinners plunged beneath that flood
> Lose all their guilty stains."

These words contain the truth of God to any one who is in a right condition of heart, and are a very valuable hint as to the way to approach God. If those who are seeking to know God desire to inquire further on the subject, they will probably be led to consult with some of the children of God.

Upon the inquiry of those under the conviction of sin as to what must be done to be saved, we tell them, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." (Acts 16:31.) Make a full consecration of your life unto God, and thus you may become a son of God. If any one is obedient to the

drawing, the next step for him to take is to say, "I give myself to the Lord and trust him fully, for I realize how unworthy I am."

The course which we are describing is that which one must follow in order to be acceptable to God. But first of all, he must desire to approach the Lord. If we should find any one who is totally depraved, there would be no use to attempt to draw such a one toward righteousness, truth and God. Even those who have the right attitude of mind may not be equally impressed at all times. It may be that some circumstances awaken them to the need of consecration before they will take the step which will enable them to become sons of God.—Rom. 12:1, 2.

THE HIGH CALLING NOT FOR ALL

No man, however, takes this step of consecration unless he is called of God. There must be the call, or invitation as there was with Aaron and with our Lord Jesus Christ. (Heb. 5:4, 5.) This call comes through the proclamation of the Gospel. Each must hear for himself before he can accept. "And how shall they hear without a preacher?" (Rom. 10:14.) So then, it is for God to begin the work with the unjustified by drawing them to Christ for justification; and it is for our Lord Jesus Christ to continue this work with the consecrated. Furthermore, it is the privilege of all who come into God's family to proclaim these truths to others, to set forth the terms by which those who receive the call may accept it, while still "it is called today," before this age of sacrifice ends.—Heb. 4:7; 2 Cor. 6:2.

None come to God in this Gospel age except those who make a sacrifice. Others may turn toward God; they may look toward God; they may be converted from a wicked life to a better one. But none except the class who are adopted into God's family are begotten of the holy Spirit. The invitation of this age is not an invitation to do the best we can; we are all called in the one hope of our calling. (Eph. 4:4.) "Gather my saints together unto me, saith the Lord, those who have a covenant with me by sacrifice."—Psa. 50:5.

It is good not to do wrong. But more than a righteous life is required of those who would be sons of God. Consecration has always been proper; it is the normal attitude for all of God's intelligent creatures. The Creator is the one to whom all are properly under obligations for every blessing which they enjoy; and heart, mind, tongue and hand should be ready for consecration to do the Father's will. Whether angels or men or new creatures in Christ—all should be in this attitude.

Since consecration is the only reasonable attitude, then, when the one hundred and forty-four thousand of the elect church shall have passed their testing it will still be appropriate for God to permit people to consecrate, and to be pleased with their consecration. Therefore, we may expect that, in the end of the reign of Christ, all the worthy ones shall have made consecration to God. It was thus in the Jewish age, although there was no "high calling" then, nor privilege to understand the deep things of God.

The privilege of becoming joint-heirs with Christ will end as soon as the elect number is completed. During the thousand years of Christ's reign, those who consecrate will come to understand all human things; but not being begotten of the holy Spirit; they cannot understand the things of the Spirit.

KNOWLEDGE OF DEEP THINGS A GRADUAL DEVELOPMENT

We believe that there are some now living, perhaps a good many, who are consecrated to God and whose consecration has been accepted, but who are not in the light of present truth. This number may include some who are what the Scriptures term "babes" in Christ, and others to whom the Scriptures refer as the "great multitude." (Heb. 5:12-14; 1 Pet. 2:2; Rev. 7:9) The "foolish virgin" class are probably in very large number all around us. The fact that there are some of these in Babylon seems to be indicated by the command, "Come out of her, my people." (Rev. 18:4) If they are in Babylon, their presence there shows that they are not yet well developed; and if they are God's people, they are not enjoying the full strength of the present truth, although Spirit-begotten.

This fact does not signify that they may not receive present truth. On the contrary, we think it quite likely that some may be helped out of Babylon and into a better understanding of the divine plan; for some of the babes may be strengthened, built up, to a full appreciation of the things of the Spirit. We are to have in mind the fact that God has so arranged that "the deep things of God" cannot be known instantaneously; this knowledge comes gradually as an evidence of faithfulness to God.

Those who have not yet learned fully to reverence God and who have not yet made progress in the development of the graces and fruits of the Spirit cannot expect to understand the deep things of God. It is our duty and privilege, not only to assist these brethren, but to build one another up and to strengthen one another. Let us see that we do these things.

FORGIVE SEVENTY TIMES SEVEN

MATTHEW 18:15-35.—DECEMBER 15.

"Be ye kind one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving each other, even as God, for Christ's sake, forgave you."—Eph. 4:32.

To learn today's lesson well means a blessing for life to every true Christian, and might be said to ensure him eternal life—so fully would he be in accord with the divine requirements. The lesson relates specially to the consecrated, to the members of the body of Christ, the church, of which he is the head, although application, of course, may be made by others with profit.

The Master's rule for his followers is: If a brother injure you, go to him alone with the matter, striving to reach an agreement, an understanding. The probability is that misunderstanding is all that there is of it. But if this does not suffice, and you consider the matter serious enough ask two others to accompany you to the offender without explaining to them the mission—leave their minds free to hear the case and to advise yourself and the person injuring.

The agreement of these brethren and their advice should be followed by both. If they disagree with you, you should acknowledge that you have erred and that the matter is evidently susceptible of this construction. If they agree with you, and your opponent refuses to heed their counsel and persists in doing you injury, and you still think it of sufficient importance to trouble the church with the matter, you are then at liberty so to do. The church's decision of the question is to be final, binding upon both. The one refusing to hear the church is to be treated as an outsider, not in the sense of doing him injury, but abstaining from appointing him to any position, or honor in the church, until his course shall be changed. How simple the divine direction; what a blessing would come from following it!

FORGIVE "SEVENTY TIMES SEVEN"

St. Peter put a hypothetical question, of how many times a brother might trespass and ask forgiveness and yet be forgiven—would seven times be the limit? The Master practically declared that there could be no limit, that any brother confessing his fault and asking forgiveness must be forgiven, if it should recur four hundred and ninety times. There is no other position left; forgiveness is obligatory when asked for. We must not be too much afraid of the consequences of following the Master's direction; we must put the responsibility of the matter with him, assured that his wisdom has not misdirected us.

Then our Lord gave a parable, to illustrate this matter, in respect to the kingdom of heaven class—the church in the present embryotic condition. A certain king had a reckoning with his servants and squared up all accounts. Amongst the others, one owed him ten thousand talents. His master commanded him to be sold, and his wife and all that he had, until the payment should be made. But the servant fell down at his master's feet and besought him to have compassion on him and he would pay the debt. The master had compassion on him and discontinued prosecution on account of the debt.

"OWED HIM A HUNDRED PENCE"

The servant thus released went out and began to look up some of those who were indebted to him, and found a fellow-servant who owed him a hundred pence, a very insignificant sum in comparison to the one which he had owed the master. He took his fellow servant by the throat, saying, "Pay me the hundred pence thou owest." His fellow servant fell at his feet and besought mercy, saying, "Have patience with me, and I will pay thee all." But he would not delay and cast him into prison till the debt should be paid. The matter finally reached the ears of the master, who called him and said, "Thou wicked servant! I released thee from the penalty of thy debt because thou didst entreat me! thou shouldst also have had mercy upon thy fellow-servant, even as I had pity upon thee." And he was angry, and delivered him to punishment till he should pay all that was due.

AN IMPORTANT LESSON HERE

What is the lesson? It is that we should have compassion upon one another, even as we desire that God for Christ's sake

should have compassion upon us. The lesson is well expressed in our text. We should be kind to one another, tender-hearted —even as God also in Christ forgave—and continues to forgive our trespasses day by day. The trespasses of others against us are trifling indeed in comparison to our obligations to the Lord. We should therefore be very willing to forgive all who ask us—"until seventy times seven." In thus exercising mercy we will be copying the divine character. The influence upon our hearts and lives will be ennobling. Our Lord Jesus is the express image of the Father's person, and we in copying the qualities of generosity and love become more Christlike, and therefore more Godlike.

SO ALSO DID GOD DO UNTO YOU

Our Lord Jesus explains that his parable teaches the principles along which the heavenly Father deals with the members of the body of Christ, which is the church. If they are harsh and unsympathetic, if they hold their brethren to a strict account along lines of justice, then the heavenly Father will so deal with them, and will hold them to account for all their shortcomings. It would seem that if God's people would realize the force of this lesson, the practice of forgiving the brethren of their trespasses and shortcomings would very generously and very generally be brought into play, for who of us could afford to have the Heavenly Father exact of us a full penalty for every imperfection, and refuse to remit any of the same?

We show our appreciation of God's mercy toward us by schooling ourselves in his character and becoming more and more merciful and generous toward all the household of faith. And if merciful toward the brethren, naturally we would be generous also toward all men. In other words, as we remember and appreciate our own weaknesses and blemishes, it will make us sympathetic with the brethren and with all mankind. And mercy, generosity, sympathy, God delights in. Such as cultivate these graces of the Spirit will be pleasing in the Lord's sight, and they will thereby be fitted and prepared to have a share with Jesus in his throne of glory; for that great Messianic kingdom will be established for the very purpose of showing mercy unto thousands of mankind, who will return to divine favor and blessing, under clearer knowledge and with the assistance that will then be afforded.

ADAM'S SIN IS NOT MEANT

We are not to understand this parable to refer to divine forgiveness of original sin. The sin of Adam is not forgiven simply because we cry for mercy. Adam and the entire race might have called for mercy, and would have received none, except in the divine way—through Jesus—through faith in his blood. Nor could this forgiveness be granted until Jesus had finished his sacrifice and ascended up on high, and there appeared in the presence of God on behalf of those coming to the Father through his merit.

This parable refers entirely to subsequent sins—sins referred to in our Lord's prayer, "Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us." This is shown also by the fact that the parable speaks of these as servants, whereas the world, as sinners, are not God's servants, but aliens, strangers, foreigners. The only ones whom God will recognize as servants are such as have come back into relationship with him through Jesus—through faith and consecration. It is these who are servants of God and who are required to have mercy upon their fellow-servants—upon other brethren.

Each and every one of the new creatures, sons of God, accepted through the merit of Jesus, is held responsible for his own weaknesses; but divine power has provided for the cancellation of these freely for Christ's sake, upon their acknowledgment and request for forgiveness. But the forgiving of these trespasses of God's children is made dependent upon their having a spirit of forgiveness toward the brethren, for "if ye do not from the heart forgive one another's trespasses, neither will your Heavenly Father forgive you." "With what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged; and with what measure" of benevolence ye mete out to others, the same shall be meted out to you. How wonderful are the divine arrangements! How blessed, how profitable to us, how helpful to us in our preparation for the kingdom?

MEAN CHRISTIANS AND NOBLE UNBELIEVERS

[This article was a reprint of that published in issue of June, 1898, which please see.]

"UNTO US A SON IS GIVEN"

Isaiah 9:1-7.—December 22.

"Unto us a Child is born; unto us a Son is given."—Verse 6.

Today's study relates to a subject which has thrilled the civilized world for centuries—a subject which will never grow old—a subject which, on the contrary, shall to all eternity be a theme of angels and of men. The birth of Jesus, to be rightly understood and esteemed, must be considered from the standpoint of a gift of love divine. Any other view of the matter is merely the casket without the jewel. The Scriptures give us the key to the thought: "God so loved the world that he gave his Only Begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but have everlasting life."—John 3:16.

The world was under sentence of death; mankind had been dying for more than four thousand years. God had pitied humanity from the first. Yea, before sin entered, divine wisdom saw the end, and would not have created man, or would not have permitted the condition which led to sin and the sentence of death, had divine wisdom not foreseen and arranged in advance for human redemption.

God had purposely arranged the matter so that it would require the death of a perfect man to redeem Adam and the race which lost life in and through him. God knew from the beginning that no such perfect man could be found, because all men were of Adamic stock and had a share in Adamic weakness, imperfection and condemnation. From the beginning God in the divine plan contemplated that the Only Begotten of the Father, the Logos, the active Agent of Divinity in the work of Creation, should be granted the great privilege of being man's Redeemer, and thereby securing a great reward—"Glory, honor and immortality," the divine nature, through a resurrection from the dead.

THE FIRST STEP OF REDEMPTION

The primary step in man's recovery necessarily was that the Logos should be made flesh and dwell amongst us and taste death, by the grace of God, for every man. (John 1:14; Heb. 2:9) It is this first step that we celebrate at this season of the year—the birth of Jesus. He who was rich, for our sakes became poor, that we through his poverty might be reclaimed.

Today's study points out that the ministry of Jesus would be in Galilee; that those people of the Jews who at the time were supposed to be in greatest darkness would see the great light of divine truth, as represented in Jesus and his ministry. This had a primary fulfilment in Galilee, where the major portion of the mighty works of Jesus were performed. But its real fulfilment lies in the future, when the great light of the Millennial kingdom, "the Sun of Righteousness, shall arise with healing in its beams." Before that glorious Sun, sorrow and sighing will flee away; ignorance and superstition will vanish; sin and darkness will be no more; every knee will bow and every tongue will confess. Jesus is the great Center of that Sun of Righteousness, but, as he points out, the bride class, in process of selection during this age, is to be with him in the morning, shining forth his glory. They shall sit with him in his throne. After the "wheat" of this age is gathered into the "garner" by the power of the first resurrection, the bride of Christ will shine forth with the bridegroom, to heal earth's sorrows and to scatter earth's night. (Matt. 13:43) All this will come to us because "unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given"; because "the Government shall rest upon his shoulders"; because "his name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, the Mighty, Mighty One, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace."

THE FALL OF BABYLON

We are to understand verses 3 to 5 as referring not to natural Israel, but to spiritual Israel—nominal. The holy nation has phenomenally increased without increasing the joy. There are many false children in the nominal family of God; there are many "tares" in the wheat-field. But in the harvest time of this age there will be a joy; the faithful "will rejoice as they that divide the spoil." The burdensome yoke of the creedal superstitions will be broken, and the rod of the oppressor, Satan, will be broken as in the day of Midian, when Gideon with his little band put to flight the army of the Midianites and set the people free. Verse 5 intimates that the fall of Babylon and the breaking of the yoke and the rod will be in the great "time of trouble." "For all the armor of the armed men and the turmoil and the garments rolled in blood shall even be for burning, for fuel of fire."

MESSIAH'S MANY TITLES

Our great Redeemer, highly exalted, is eventually to bear many titles in commemoration of the many wonderful Offices he will fill and services he will accomplish. But these are yet future. His great work in the past, the Redemption work, was the foundation of all his future work. On account of his faithfulness he will have a right to assume these various offices and use these various powers; and as each comes into exercise it will be used by Jesus. The right to govern the world is his since he died on our behalf, but he awaits the Father's time for taking to himself his glorious power to reign; and the Government must come to him before he can begin to fulfil the various titles.

First of all, his revelation to the world will be as the Wonderful One, the embodiment, the Expression, of divine justice, divine love, divine wisdom and divine power. As yet the world knoweth him not. He will be revealed to mankind "in flaming fire" in the time of trouble, and subsequently, in the rescue work of his Millennial kingdom.

He will be the world's Counselor, to give assistance, guidance, direction, whereby they may return through restitution into harmony with Jehovah and to the enjoyment of the blessings provided through redemption. As the Head of the church he has been her Counselor, but our text refers to him as the Great King or Governor of the world, and as the world's Instructor, the Great Prophet, or Teacher, whom God promised through Moses.

His title, The Mighty God, or Mighty, Mighty One, will be recognized then, on earth, as well as in heaven—"that him hath God set forth to be a Prince and a Savior, to grant repentance and remission of sins to Israel," and "to all that are afar off." —Acts 5:31; 2:39.

The title, The Everlasting Father, will apply to him as the Life-Giver of the world, during the thousand years of his reign. In all that time he will be giving "life more abundant" to mankind—everlasting life to all who will obey him—therefore his title, The Everlasting Father, or the Father who will give everlasting life to humanity. All the world of mankind, regenerated on the human plane, will obtain their right to everlasting life as human beings in an earthly Paradise from their Redeemer, who will then be their King. Not so the church, for Jesus is not the church's Everlasting Father. On the contrary, St. Peter declares "The God and Father of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ hath begotten us again to a hope of life."

His title, The Prince of Peace, will not apply to him at the beginning of his reign, when he will be breaking in pieces as a potter's vessel every human system out of accord with the divine standards (Rev. 2:27; Psa. 2:9), but true peace shall speedily be established, and He shall be known as The Prince of Peace, and One whose reign will be undisputed and unmolested. "Of the increase of his government and of peace there shall be no end"; there will be no rebellion; his kingdom will not pass away. When his reign shall terminate finally, at the close of the thousand years, it will be because "He will deliver the kingdom over to God, even the Father," that he may be the Great All in All.

"UPON THE THRONE OF DAVID"

Messiah's kingdom is styled "the Throne of David" for two reasons: first, the name of David signifies Beloved, and the Messiah, as the Beloved of God, of the Father, is the Antitype of David, even as Messiah's kingdom will be the Antitype of David's kingdom. David merely "sat upon the throne of the kingdom of the Lord"; it was not his. So the Greater than David will sit upon the Throne of the kingdom of Jehovah, to order it and to establish it to completion, during the thousand years of his reign. Then he will deliver it up. "The zeal (love) of Jehovah of Hosts will perform this," operating through Messiah.

TWO YEARS MORE

Two years more, and I shall see him, whom not having seen I love,
This grand prospect, daily, hourly, holds my heart on things above;
Now by faith, I'm pressing onward in the footsteps of my Lord,
Rough the pathway, steep and narrow, 'tis the path my Master trod.

Oh, the rapture of that meeting, Oh, what ecstacy 'twill bring,
When with open, perfect vision I shall gaze upon my King!
I shall feast upon the beauty of the One I love so well,
And with tongue no longer stammering, all my love for him I'll tell.

Two years, and I'll see the Father, when the Son with loving pride,
Shall conduct me to his presence, with the rest of his dear bride.
What a sense of awe will fill me, as with unveiled face I gaze
On that grand and mighty Being, whom all heaven unites to praise!

Shall I know myself, I wonder, when he takes me to his heart,
And of all that heavenly glory I shall find myself a part?
Heaven not complete without me, mine, eternities of bliss?
Oh, my soul, thou must not stagger, for thy God hath promised this!

Oft a secret fear assails me, that I may be left behind;
Then I bid my soul take courage, 'tis that enemy of mine!
He would use to cause my downfall censure sharp, or flattering breath,
For he hates God's holy children with a hatred strong as death.

But my Father will not leave me to his mercy, but prepare
Heavenly armor to protect me, which, if I will always wear,
Every fight will prove me victor, as I wield the two-edged Sword,
World and flesh and powers of evil, all must fall before his Word!

Oh, my soul, thy life dependeth on thy faithfulness alone;
While the days and hours are passing, art thou holding fast thy crown?
Keep this thought before thee always, let it daily strengthen thee,
"Two years more decides forever thine eternal destiny!"

Then the thought, Oh! how it thrills me, any day he may send word—
"Child, thy work on earth is finished, enter into thy reward."
But, if I need further testings, crosses heavy, trial sore,
I can wait, for at the longest, it is only two years more!

—UNKNOWN.

KNOW OF THE DOCTRINE

JOHN 7:17.—DECEMBER 29.

"If any man willeth to do His will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself."—John 7:17.

We are living in a day when the very word doctrine seems to be offensive to the majority of Christian people. Each denomination realizes that its own system of doctrines is imperfect, unsatisfactory, undefendable. And the same is believed in respect to all other doctrines. Hence by mutual consent Christian people seem disposed to henceforth and forever ignore doctrines; for they believe that, if after nineteen centuries they are thus confused, the matter never was clear and never will be clear to anybody.

All this is a great mistake; the doctrines of Christ, as presented by the Great Teacher and his apostles, was a great message, of which none of them were ashamed. The difficulty with the Lord's people today is that we gradually fell away from those doctrines—we gradually put darkness for light and light for darkness, and thus gradually got into the spirit of Babylon, and into the spirit of bondage to human traditions and creeds. Instead of shunning doctrines, we should realize that they are the very things needed to cause the scattering of our darkness and superstitions, and to draw all of God's people nearer together.

The doctrines of Christ and the apostles is what we need to inspire us to break down all our creed fences, which so long have separated us as God's people, the one from the other, in various denominational folds, all of which are contrary to the

divine arrangement; for God has but the one fold for all his "sheep" of this age, as he will have another fold for the restitution "sheep" of the next age—the Messianic kingdom age.

"ONE LORD, ONE FAITH, ONE BAPTISM"

Can we doubt that if as God's people we put away sectarianism and the creed spectacles of our forefathers, and if we go with pure, sincere hearts to the Lord and his Word, we will there find again the "one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father over all, and one Lord and Savior Jesus Christ," and "one church of the first-born, whose names are written in heaven"? (Eph. 4:5, 6; Heb. 12:23) Let us hearken to the words: "Cast not away therefore your confidence, which hath great recompense of reward," "But remember the former days, in which ye endured a great fight of afflictions; partly whilst ye were made a gazing stock both by reproaches and by afflictions; and partly whilst ye became companions of them that were so used." "For ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise." Heb. 10:35, 32, 33, 36.

The time seems long to all of us, even though we remember that "a day with the Lord is as a thousand years." When we think of the fact that it is thirty-nine hundred years since God's promise to Abraham, that his seed should bless all the families of the earth—when we think of the fact that Israel did not receive that great privilege of being the spiritual seed from which primarily that blessing should go forth, and that the "elect" are receiving it; when we think of the fact that God has been nearly nineteen centuries in selecting the "elect" from Israel and from all nations, it is enough to stagger our faith unless we hold firmly to the divine promise and remember that God confirmed it with an Oath. By these two immutable, unchangeable things, the divine Word and the divine Oath, we know that the seed of Abraham is to be developed, and that eventually it is to bless all the families of the earth. It is the divine will that we allow our faith in this great promise of God to be "an anchor to our souls, sure and steadfast, entering into that within the veil."—Heb. 6:19.

THE DOCTRINES OF CHRIST

What we all need as God's people is to put away human theories and other gospels and take hold afresh on the Gospel of Christ. These other gospels are other messages of hope, aside from the one which the Bible presents. For instance, Theosophy is one of these; Evolution is another; New Theology is another. These all hold out a different gospel from that which Jesus and the Apostles presented; the one that was given to use for our sanctification, and through the holding fast of which, and the obedience to The Faith, we are to be saved and given a share with Messiah in his glorious empire of the world.

The doctrines of Christ mean those doctrines presented in the Bible by Jesus and His mouthpieces, the Apostles. These doctrines relate to the church and to the world, and God's blessing for each; these doctrines relate to sin and its forgiveness; the terms of that forgiveness, the basis of that forgiveness—the death of Jesus—and the hope of that forgiveness, release from divine condemnation, fellowship with God, and everlasting life obtained through resurrection of the dead. See Hebrews 6:1-3.

A PREREQUISITE TO KNOWLEDGE

But some one will inquire, Why is it so difficult to understand the doctrines of Christ? Why are there six hundred different denominations of Christians? Why do they all so misunderstand the matter—that these different denominations have resulted from the differences of theory respecting the teachings of the Bible? The simple explanation is that, shortly after the death of the Apostles when the church began to be in a measure of prosperity, the adversary came in and sowed the seeds of false doctrines, using human lips and human pens in his service, through pride and ambition. The darkness became so great that, looking back today, we speak of the period as the "dark ages."

The various denominations of Christendom are evidences of honesty, perseverance and love of the Truth, because our forefathers, who made these creeds, were each trying to get more and more out of the dark and back to the "True Light." They all made the mistake, however, of holding too much to the creeds and theories of the past. Let us not make the same mistake; let us cut loose entirely from every authority outside the Word of God. Whoever can help us understand God's Word—we should be glad to have his assistance; but we cannot acknowledge as inspired or authoritative the teachings of the "Fathers" of the early times, however conscientious they may have been, because we cannot recognize that there were any such authorized successors to the apostles.

God, who foretold through the prophets this long period of darkness, and who has blessed and guided his saintly children throughout it, without removing all of their blindness, has promised that with the end of this age will come a great blessing and enlightenment upon his people, when the "wise virgins" will find their lamps burning brightly, and be able to understand and appreciate the deep things of God: "The wise shall understand, but none of the wicked shall understand." In the end of this age the curtain was to be drawn, and the "true light" was to shine forth, scattering all the darkness. We are in the dawning of this new age today, and therefore may see much more clearly than did our forefathers, the divine character and plan for human salvation.

WILLETH TO DO HIS WILL

Today's study is a message from the Master's own lips. He gives us the key to a clear knowledge of his doctrines, namely, that the student must be fully consecrated to God and fully desirous of knowing his will and his plan. In order to see light in God's light—to see the truth, from the divine standpoint of the divine revelation, we must draw near to God in the spirit of our minds, consecrated in our heart. We must will to do his will.

But what does this mean? What is it to will to do his will? God's will represents actual perfection of thought and word and deed, toward God, toward our fellows in the body of Christ, and toward all mankind. This is the divine standard set up, but we are no more able to fulfil its demands than were the Jews. As St. Paul declares, "We cannot do the things that we would." Weakness of the flesh, frailty and imperfection, we all have with the world; the best that we can do is to will to do right, and to the best of our ability carry out that covenant with the Lord to do his will. At the very best all will come short of perfection.

But for those who have come into harmony with God, through Christ—for those who have made a covenant with him by sacrifice—for those who have Jesus for their Advocate, a provision has been made, whereby the willing, all desiring to do the divine will, and manifesting endeavors so to do, are counted as righteous—as though they did the divine will perfectly. This class, in the Scriptures, is known as the "saints"; they are the prospective members of the body of Christ. It is to these that the promises of our text apply, that they shall know to do the divine will, shall know whether Jesus merely made up these teachings of himself, or whether he was the active agent of Jehovah in what he did and in what he taught.

At the close of the year, and on the threshhold of another, shall we not determine to give our hearts, our wills, fully to the Lord—determine in our wills to do God's will? If so, following the instructions of the Word of God during the coming year, we shall doubtless be blessed and enabled fully to know, to appreciate, to understand, the doctrines of Christ—the deep things of God, which are revealed to this class by the Spirit of God. Blessed are all who put their trust in him!

ARMAGEDDON SERMON IN NEWSPAPERS

We learn that Brother Russell's Armageddon sermon preached at the Brooklyn Academy of Music, November 3, has been published in a great many newspapers which do not publish the sermons regularly. We trust that such publishers will be encouraged to continue the service. We will be glad to receive sample copies of all such papers. Mark these "Special" on the wrapper.

When your newspaper fails to print the sermons, the proper place to write your protest is to its editor or publisher or both.

Brother Russell supplies the sermon regularly, and if they are not printed the editor and publishers are responsible.

The only way the publishers have of certainly knowing whether a sufficient proportion of their readers really appreciate the sermons, is from letters of approval when the sermons are published; or prompt letters of regret when they are discontinued.

The Fourth Volume of the Studies in the Scriptures will be entitled hereafter, The Battle of Armageddon. The Armageddon sermon will constitute an additional feature. The price is uniform with the other volumes, 35c delivered.

INTERESTING QUESTIONS

CAN ANY OF THE GREAT COMPANY BE OF THE RESTITUTION CLASS?

Question.—Can any of the great company become members of the restitution class?

Answer.—We understand that the terms under which any are begotten of the holy Spirit are that they renounce, give up, the human nature. When God accepts their consecration and takes such into covenant relationship with himself, he indicates that relationship by begetting them of the holy Spirit. The only class into which these can come for future life is that of spirit or heavenly beings. If they live up to all the terms and conditions of their sacrifice, then they will have the very fullest blessing which God has provided for the loyal and to which he has called them. But for those who fail to live up to the highest standard—that of walking in the footsteps of Jesus—the arrangement seems to be that they shall at least prove themselves loyal, even if not to the same degree as their brethren.

This loyalty will be tested in the great time of trouble through which the great company will go. Then if they fail to prove their loyalty, apparently they will lose that life in the second death. But if they give up the earthly life and manifest loyalty to the Lord, even though they may never give it up willingly, but merely when brought to straits, then they will have life on the spirit plane.

The merit of Christ, which has been under embargo, as it were, must all be released before the restitution work can begin. In other words, the little flock must have been "changed" and the great company must have suffered destruction of the flesh, before the merit can again be free in the hands of Justice, ready to be given to the world in restitution.

Therefore, our answer would be, We cannot expect the Spirit-begotten ones to pass through the time of trouble in the end of this age and to live on during the Millennial age; for they belong to the church of the first-born, all of whom must be born before the after-borns can be brought forth. The after-born will be the world in the restitution.

FIFTH SUNDAY CONVENTIONS

Question.—Are Fifth Sunday conventions advantageous?

Answer.—We are perplexed how to answer this question, and must leave the answering of it to each class for itself, without any particular advice even. From some we have heard good reports with blessings secured. From others we have reports to the contrary. Those who have had practical experience with these conventions should decide for themselves. We have had no experience in this direction.

HOW TREAT "THE MENACE"

Question.—How should the WATCH TOWER readers treat "The Menace?"

Answer.—This is a free country and everyone has a right to follow that course which he believes will be most to the Lord's glory and most to the advancement and the good of his fellow-men. The Editor of "The Menace" is merely exercising his rights. As for the WATCH TOWER, it pursues a different course without criticising others. Perhaps the Lord may have a work for "The Menace" for all we know. Our judgment is that his work for us is in a different direction and we exhort all the WATCH TOWER readers to reserve all their might and physical strength for the promulgation of the truth as the Lord has been granting us to see it within the last forty years in the WATCH TOWER. It is our mission to preach the Word—the Gospel of the kingdom. We cannot do all that we would in this direction, and hence have no time to devote to other matters, political, social, etc.

TRULY BEAUTIFUL

Beautiful hands are they that do
The work of the noble, good and true,
Busy for them the long day through;
Beautiful faces—they that wear
The light of a pleasing spirit there,
It matters little if dark or fair;
And truly beautiful in God's sight,
Are the precious souls who love the right.

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LOVE NOT THE WORLD

"Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him."—1 John 2:15.

In the text, "Love not the world," we do not understand the term "world" to mean either the human race or the planet on which we live. The thought of the text seems to be more particularly the present order of things, for the Greek word here translated world is *kosmos*, signifying arrangement. We are to appreciate the beauties of nature. We are to love the human family, whom God also loves, though not in the sense in which he loves the church of Christ. We read, "God so loved the world that he gave his Only Begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."—John 3:16.

St. John cannot therefore be understood to refer to the world of mankind, when he says, "Love not the world." For them we should have sympathy similar to that which the Heavenly Father has for the fallen race. The Scriptures inform us that the present order, or arrangement, of things on earth is entirely out of harmony with God's will, or purpose; for the world is ruled by selfishness. The divine arrangement is that love shall be the rule among God's creatures. "God is love. . . . . He that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God."—1 John 4:8, 16.

The world operates along lines different from those of love. Each one strives selfishly to heap together treasure for himself, even if meantime his neighbor goes destitute. Many live in luxury, while realizing that there are others who lack the necessities of life. Many seek for power to control men, not with the thought of their uplift, but with a view to using them for selfish ends and motives. This spirit of selfishness belongs to the present order of things. We see it in operation everywhere.

The spirit of the world lays hold of all the forces of nature and seeks to control these, to adapt them to its own selfish interests. It is true that much good has resulted indirectly from this spirit of selfishness. For instance, a man with a great amount of the vain-glorious spirit may for his own selfish purposes benefit others. A general might have so much pride in his service that in order to win praise for himself he would care for his soldiers and have them well dressed. Some of our great captains of industry have done the world good service, and incidentally have blessed many, while carrying out their own designs.

SELFISHNESS THE SPIRIT OF THE WORLD

If all of the great worldly enterprises were undertaken with a view to the betterment of mankind, the spirit of these would not be selfish. We know, indeed, that much is done to help those who are needy, and that where there is a motive of this kind, it is often misinterpreted and misjudged to be selfish. But "the Lord looketh on the heart." (1 Sam. 16:7) Those who have the selfish heart, the selfish intentions, will continue to love the things of the world. In proportion as such may be shown that there is a new order of affairs coming, in that proportion the selfish-minded will not be in sympathy with the change of dispensation.

If a man conducts a large enterprise for the benefit of those who would have opportunity to share such blessings, that man would rejoice that there is a better time coming. A man who would truly rejoice to have a better arrangement of affairs, would not have the spirit that dominates in the present order of things. He would have the Spirit of God, the Spirit of love, the spirit that will dominate the new order of things, that will control during the thousand years of Christ's reign.

Many are in the attitude of mind which would say, "My employer is rich. Whenever I get the opportunity to help myself to some of his money, I will do so and get as much as possible." Such people love the present order of things, whether they be rich or poor. A great many poor love the things of this world, and hope some day to get their share.

There are people who say, "Oh, I do not love the world and its selfish spirit! From the crown of my head to the soles of my feet I am opposed to it. Sometimes I say to my husband, 'This is a very selfish world, John.' Then he replies, 'Yes, Mary, it is. Everywhere people are seeking for everything that will gratify self and selfish desires. But while

you condemn the ways of the world, yet you delight in the good things of life provided by my industry—the automobile, the pleasant home, etc.' And I must acknowledge that he is right. I fear that I could not be happy without them." Such a person certainly loves the things of the world, even while making good use of them.

It seems to be a serious charge to say that any one who is in that attitude of mind which loves the world and the things belonging to it, has not the love of the Father in him. We do not understand, however, that such a one has no love for the Father or that the Father has no love for him. The Apostle seems to be addressing this message to the church. Those who have been adopted into God's family must continue to love him or they would not be counted as members of that class.

What, then, is the full import of this expression—"The love of the Father is not in him"? To us it would mean that the love of the Father had not gotten full control of his heart, and this would mean that ultimately—unless he should gain a victory over his selfish disposition—he would not be accepted as a son.

Everywhere about us is this spirit of selfishness. Every child of God should be on guard against it and against willingness to participate in the things of this world. We should strive to be in that condition which is pleasing to the Father. We are to try to rid ourselves of the spirit of the world and to be filled with the Spirit of the Father. This would not mean that we are not to appreciate beautiful things, or that we are not to like to see others striving to benefit the world; but that we should not be satisfied with any of these things, so far as we are concerned.

TWO KINDS OF MOTIVES

Whatever talents we possess we should use for the good of humanity in any kind of work that would be for the glory of God. Even a good work could be engaged in from the spirit of the world rather than from the Spirit of God; that is, it might be done for what we could get from others in the way of money, honor or influence; or, on the other hand, it might be for the good we desired to do for others.

The highest of all services is that of the ministry of the Word of God. Even this noble service might be pursued from either of two motives—the love of the Father or the love of self. Apparently there are some engaged in the ministry purely for the sake of the loaves and fishes, for the honorable position it gives them in the world, or because they do not know of anything that would serve them better.

Again, there are those, no doubt, who have entered the ministry, not for selfish reasons, but because they desire to serve God, to serve the truth, to serve his people. The Lord alone knows what has induced any one to enter the ministry. But since we are living in the day that will try every man's work, God will prove what sort it is—will show what motive is behind the deed.

Those who are serving merely from the worldly spirit will be vexed with everything that is making for truth; and in proportion as their earthly interests suffer, they will be angry. Those who are of the right spirit, however, will rejoice in everything that will be helpful to humanity, in everything that is to the glory of God, in everything that will make the Bible more easily understood.

In fact, we may suppose that the real testing, so far as the church is concerned, is the making manifest whether we love the world—the things of the present time—or whether we love God supremely. As time goes on, it will be even more impossible to harmonize the spirit of love and the spirit of selfishness. Those who love God will be fully out of harmony with the spirit of the present evil world.

"Love not the world!
He in whose heart the love
Of vanity has found a place, shuts out
The enduring world above.

"Love not the world!
However fair it seem;
Who loveth this vain world—the love of God
Abideth not in him."

THE RETRIBUTIVE CHARACTER OF DIVINE LAW

[This article was a reprint of that published in issue of June 1, 1894, which please see.]

THE CREATION OF THINGS MUNDANE

January 5—Genesis 1:1-31; 2:1-3.

"In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. And the earth was waste and void, and darkness was upon the face of the deep."—Gen. 1:1, 2. (R. V.)

In the past, Bible students have not been sufficiently critical in studying God's Word. Today's lesson illustrates this. The Genesis account does not begin with the creation of the physical earth, as was once supposed. "The beginning" refers merely to the work accomplished by divine power in bringing the waste and lifeless earth into condition for man's use.

The earth was already in existence, and had been created by divine power before the time mentioned in the Genesis account. Read our text several times until this is clearly seen. Higher Critics (would go back millions of years to) discuss various theories respecting how the mass of earth was formed, and they attribute millions of years to this. Bible students may well content themselves with the record that the earth already was at "the beginning," of the Genesis account.

The Bible mentions days of various lengths; for instance, "the day of temptation in the wilderness"—forty years (Heb. 3:8, 9); "A day with the Lord is as a thousand years" (2 Pet. 3:8); our Lord's "day," etc. (John 8:56) While God could have accomplished the great work of ordering the earth in six 24-hour days, or in six minutes, for that matter, there is no reason to think that such short days are meant.

God arranged a great week of seven days for his great work of bringing man to perfection. Six of these days prepared our planet to receive Adam as its lord and earthly king, an image of his Creator. The seventh day, which there began, is not yet completed—it lacks a thousand years of completion. During that period, the Bible tells us, earth will be brought to a Paradise condition and man will be restored by his Redeemer to God's image.

Six great thousand-year periods or days have passed since Adam was created, according to Bible chronology. We are now in the dawning of the great seventh day or Sabbath day of human experience. God has promised that this seventh day of a thousand years will be very different from the preceding six days, in which mankind has experienced a reign of sin and death. The seventh day of a thousand years is Scripturally called the "Day of Christ," and by many it is styled the Millennium. In it Satan and sin are to be overthrown, righteousness is to be established by the Redeemer, and mankind, purchased by the precious blood at Calvary are all to have full opportunity for arising from present degradation to re-attainment of the image and likeness of God, lost in Eden by Adam's disobedience.

The seventh day of the creative week began with Adam's creation and has already lasted six thousand years, and is to be completed with the thousand years of Christ's Reign. The seventh creative day will be seven thousand years long. Whoever sees this to be a reasonable deduction can easily suppose that the six preceding days of the Genesis account were, likewise, seven thousand years each. Reckoned thus, the total period from the time that divine energy began to operate upon the waste earth down to the time when the whole work of creation and restitution will be fully completed, would be 7 times 7,000 years, or 49,000 years.

According to the Bible, that time will be a thousand years hence, when The Christ shall have accomplished his work for mankind to the full and shall deliver up the kingdom to God, even the Father. At that moment the fiftieth thousand-year period will begin, with every creature in heaven and on earth ascribing praise to him that sitteth upon the throne, and to the Lamb, forever. How appropriate this will be, especially when we recall that in God's arrangement fifty is the greatest climax of numbers! In Bible usage the number seven is symbolical of perfection, and 7 times 7 represents a completeness of perfection; and the fiftieth or Jubilee following is climacteric.

"LET THERE BE LIGHT"

We hold that the Genesis account is in full accord with all the facts known to science. There was no light in the earth prior to the time when divine energy brooded on the surface of the waters. The account seems to suggest an electrical influence, and a light somewhat resembling the Aurora Borealis. The earth was dark because shrouded with an impenetrable fog and an upper canopy of water, mineral water, etc. This thoroughly shut out the light of the sun, moon and stars, which did not shine in upon the earth in any sense until the fourth day. The Jewish day, patterned after the Genesis account, began with the night. So the first day of 7,000 years, under the divine energy, gradually increased this electrical light and prepared for the next epoch.

The work of the second day, or epoch, was the establishment of a firmament, separating between the waters of the sky and the waters of the earth. Doubtless the light had to do in a natural way with bringing about this secondary feature of the earth's preparation. The establishment of the firmament began very slowly, but was completed with the end of the second day.

In the third day, or epoch, under divine direction earthquakes took place, mountain ranges were thrown up, and thus the waters of the earth were gathered into seas, draining off a land surface in preparation for vegetation. Forthwith vegetation sprang up—grass, bushes, trees, with their seeds and fruits. The account does not say that God made so many different kinds of grasses and fruit, trees, etc. It declares that under divine command the earth brought forth these various kinds. Nothing in the Genesis account would interfere with an evolutionary theory as respects vegetation. Thus, under divine supervision, the third day accomplished its purpose.

According to the Vailian Theory the earth was once surrounded by rings and belts similar to those of Saturn and Jupiter, consisting of minerals and waters thrown off to a great distance when the earth long previously was in a molten state. These rings, attracted to the earth, approached her gradually, one by one. Held off by the firmament, they spread out like a great curtain, causing much of the darkness. Then, influenced by the motion of the earth on her axis, they gravitated toward the poles, gradually becoming heavier. Finally they broke, one after the other, coming down as great deluges, burying vegetation, which later became coal beds, and depositing minerals of various kinds which man has since been using.

Each successive deluge added minerals to the crust of the earth and water to the seas, the weight of the seas creating further upheavals of mountains, etc. The last of these rings came down as a deluge in Noah's day. Previously, for centuries, it had been a great watery canopy. Through it the sun, moon and stars were visible, but not clear, as now. Under these conditions there were no storms, nor was there any rain. (Gen. 2:3) The entire earth under this canopy was like a greenhouse of equable temperature. This accounts for the vegetable and animal remains found near the poles, and long imbedded in ice, which formed instantly when the canopy collapsed as a deluge.

With the fall of several of earth's "rings," the atmosphere became translucent, so that the luminaries of the sky could exercise their beneficial influences in respect to animal life about to be created. These luminaries have served mankind as a great clock, marking days, months and years. Thus the work of the fourth epoch-day was accomplished.

On the fifth day the waters began to swarm with living, moving creatures. Next came fowl and great sea monsters. Here again a measure of evolution is suggested by the statement that "the waters brought forth abundantly" the various kinds, under divine supervision. Only in the case of man does the Bible distinctly declare a personal creation.

The creation of land animals marks the sixth epoch-day. Fish and fowl took precedence, as scientists agree. Again we read that "the earth brought forth," but we also read that the Lord directed the matter in the development of the different kinds or varieties.

It was at the very end of the sixth day that God created man. The earth did not bring him forth. He was created in his Maker's character-likeness, to be the king of earth, to have dominion over the creatures of the land, the air and the sea. Another account seems to imply that Mother Eve was taken from Father Adam's side, to be a helpmate on his own plane, in the beginning of the seventh day, for this was the last feature of creation. We read that God finished his work on the seventh day and rested. He has rested or ceased from his creative work during this seventh day, leaving the finishing touches to be accomplished by the Redeemer during his Messianic kingdom, which will complete the seventh day—49,000 years from the time God said, "Let there be light."

"GOD CREATED MAN IN HIS OWN IMAGE"

JANUARY 12—GENESIS 1:26—2:25; PSALM 8.

How different the statement respecting man's creation from that describing the creation of plants and the lower animals which the seas and the earth brought forth! Man's creation was premeditated. In advance, God designed man to be the king over the earth, having dominion over fish and fowl and beasts, even as his Creator has the supreme dominion of the universe. He was to be his Creator's image, not in physical form, but in moral and intellectual qualities. He was not to be of the divine nature, but of human nature—a fleshly being resembling his Creator, a spirit being. This intention of Deity was fully carried out in man's creation. As we read, "God created man in his own image; in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them." Not a word here can be construed as in any sense implying the evolution of man from the lower creatures.

A FALL, NOT AN EVOLUTION

So far from teaching an evolution, the Bible teaches the very reverse, both in the Old and in the New Testament. St. Paul declares, By one man's disobedience sin entered into the world, and death as the result of sin. Thus death passed upon all men, because all are sinners. (Romans 5:12) The Prophet David refers to his fallen condition and queries respecting God's mercy in providing for a man a redemption and restoration to divine favor, saying, "What is man, that thou art mindful of him?" (Psalm 8:4) He then proceeds briefly to picture man's glorious condition before he fell, saying, "Thou madest him a little lower than the angels. Thou crownedest him with glory and honor and didst set him over the works of thy hands." Later he describes man's dominion as related to beasts of the field, fowl of the air and fish of the sea.

In a word, the Bible represents man as the crowning masterpiece of mundane creation. The seal of God's Word is set to this in the statement that God pronounced him "very good." This is also implied in the statement that God created him in his image, for the Scriptures declare, "All his work is perfect." Nor could we for a moment esteem it just or right that any but a perfect being should be placed on trial for life or death everlasting.

NOT TWO CREATION ACCOUNTS

Higher Critics, anxious to discredit the Bible, claim that the second chapter of Genesis is another account of the whole creation written by a different person. They claim that it gives a different order of creation, showing man created first, and then trees, beasts, etc. To us this is all foolishness. Moses, having described creation in its logical order, merely emphasizes and particularizes some of his previous statements.

He declares (Genesis 2:4) that he has already described the generation or developments of things heavenly and earthly from the beginning, before there was any plant life. Incidentally he mentions that at that time there was no rain—before the flood. He again assures us that man was God's last creation, to be the king or supervisor of earth. Then, much to our satisfaction, Moses proceeds to give an account of the specialty of man's creation, so different from that of the lower animals and vegetation. He was not evolved, but was God's handiwork. He was not spirit, but flesh, formed of the dust of the ground. But still he had the spirit of life common to all the lower creatures, of whom he was the head or king. The Hebrew reads, literally, "In his nostrils the breath of lives"—the breath or spirit of life common to all breathing creatures.

Then a description of Eden follows, how God particularly supervised its preparation as the home of the king of earth, in which God placed him. Nothing in this implies that Eden was made after Adam's creation. On the contrary, we have already been informed that God's creative work ceased with the production of Mother Eve, and that since then he has rested or desisted from further mundane creation—leaving to his glorious Son, Messiah, the work of human redemption and restitution.—Acts 3:19-21.

When we read (V. 19) that all animals that God had previously created were named by Adam, it would be foolish for us to suppose that the animals were a subsequent creation. This bringing of all creatures to Adam's attention implies his mastery of them all and leads up to the statement that in none of them was he able to find fellowship and companionship. God wished him to realize the need of a companion and wife before providing her.

MAN ORIGINALLY SEXLESS

The details of human creation imply that Adam lived in Eden some time alone and sexless. Some Bible students infer from the chronology that it was about two years from the time of Adam's creation until the expulsion from Eden under the death sentence. The cause for the division of Adam into two persons is stated; the earth was to be filled, populated with a race of his species, and amongst all the creatures none was suitable as a companion for him or fit to be his mate, and the mother of an offspring in his likeness.

Thus again is shown that Adam was distinctly different from apes and monkeys, and all the other creatures placed under his control. He was in the likeness of his Creator. Other Scriptures show us that after the earth shall have been filled with a population, it is the divine purpose that the sex quality in humanity shall be dropped. Jesus' words are, "They that shall attain unto that age (of perfection—future) will neither marry nor be given in marriage, but be like the angels of heaven"—sexless. See Luke 20:34-36.

The division of Adam into two parts, male and female, left the headship with the male, but deprived him of some of his sympathetic qualities. His wife, predominating in the sympathetic tendencies, had in her perfection less of the masculine and aggressive traits; but the two were perfectly adapted to each other's needs and fulfilled each other's ideals. The fall from God's favor has affected both sexes and has disturbed the original balance and harmony, producing extremes of coarseness and effeminacy, destroying perfection and robbing the marriage relationship of much of its ideal happiness.

The restitution or resurrection of the willing and obedient, to be brought about by Messiah's kingdom, will not mean the restoration of sex perfections, but rather the gradual perfecting of each individual in the image and likeness of God in personal completeness, such as Adam possessed before his division.

The sex attractions having passed away, man will not be alone, as Adam was originally; for the earth will be full of human brethren, all in the image of God and in fullest fellowship of spirit, enjoying the world-wide Eden. Such a condition of things can be appreciated only as we take the Divine standpoint and realize the superior perfection of God and the angels in their sexless condition—though always spoken of as masculine.

"BY ONE MAN'S DISOBEDIENCE"

Note the consistency of the Bible theory which necessitated the division of one man into male and female. God purposed that the entire race must proceed from the one man. He foresaw sin and how he would permit it to flourish, and how he would provide for man's recovery. If two or more separate individuals had sinned and involved the race, it would have required just as many redeemers, according to the divine law, "An eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth," a man's life for a man's life. (Deut. 19:21) Because God from the beginning intended only one Lamb of God, one glorious Redeemer, therefore the entire race sprang from the one man Adam, that "as by a man came death, by a man" should come "the resurrection of the dead."—1 Cor. 15:21.

SECOND ADAM AND SECOND EVE

We should not forget that Adam and Eve in some respects foreshadowed Christ and the church. Jesus personally is the great Savior of mankind, whose death constitutes the ransom-price for the sins of Adam and the entire race. He is to be the Great Life-Giver, or Father of mankind. During his Millennial reign he will give back earthly life to Adam and as many of his race as will receive it—raising them gradually, more and more, out of sin and death conditions, up to perfection during that thousand years,—"the times of refreshing that shall come from the presence of the Lord, ... the times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began." (Acts 3:19 to 21) This will be the glorious work of regenerating the world,—"whosoever will" may then drink the water of life freely.

But before beginning his work of regenerating the world, God has arranged that first from the wound in Christ's side, figuratively, an elect church shall be formed to be his companion and joint-heir in his kingdom—the second Eve, on the spirit plane, as he, the Heavenly One, is the second Adam.

The church will not be the Life-Giver or Father, but she will be the mother, or care-taker of the regenerated hosts of humanity during the Millennium. Under her care the willing and obedient will retain the image of God in the flesh.

THE ENDING OF THE GENTILE TIMES

If in times past the records of history had been kept as they are at present, there would seem to be no excuse for any discrepancy or misunderstanding on the subject of chronology. But they were not so kept. In olden times it was the custom to date events according to the period of the reigning king, thus: In the third year of the reign of King Cyrus; in the seventh year of the reign of King Solomon, etc. As king followed king, some living a few months, some a few years, some many years, the threads of history were always in danger of becoming entangled. Indeed, no particular necessity was seen for keeping chronological records. Even the Bible merely relates these histories in their order, telling the number of the years of the life or of the reign of each king, without twisting these threads into one common cord of history.

So matters continued with little effort to arrange an exact chronology of human history, until the Sixth Century A. D. when Dionysius, a Roman abbot, set forth our present method of counting, styled the Christian Calendar. It undertook to mark the beginning of the Christian era with the birth of Christ, reckoned as January 1st. Previous history was reckoned and styled Before Christ (B. C.) and subsequent history was styled *Anno Domini* (A. D.)—in the year of our Lord.

Whether Dionysius began his A. D. period January 1st, A. D. 1, or whether he began it January 1st, A. D. 0, we may not be sure; neither may we feel too certain whether he began the B. C. dates December 31st, B. C. 0, or December 31st, B. C. 1. For all ordinary purposes this question would be rather immaterial. But it has a very important bearing on our calculation of Gentile Times. Even in this particular the matter seemed less important thirty or forty years ago than it does today; for now as we come down to the close of the Gentile Times we are disposed to give every feature a critical and microscopical examination not thought so necessary some years ago.

Then, we were content to say, "606 B. C. seems a well authenticated date for the destruction of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar, and B. C. 536 the date when the seventy years' appointed desolation of the land ceased." Our method adopted in the STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES was a simple one. We said: The Bible times of Gentile supremacy and Israel's rejection equals 7 times 360, or 2,520 years. From this we deducted the date before Christ (B. C.) 606. Thus we found the year A. D. 1914.

	360
	7
	2,520
B. C.	606
A. D	1914

AN OPEN QUESTION

Coming now to a very critical examination of the date 536 B. C., there is an open question: Shall we call it 536 full years to A. D., or 535 full years? The difference in time between October 1st and January 1st would be the fourth of a year; hence our query is respecting 536¼ or 535¼ years B. C. What is the proper method of calculation, is in dispute. If we count the first year B. C. as 0, then the date 536¼ B. C. is the proper one for the end of the seventy years of captivity. But if we begin to reckon it by counting the first year before the Christian era as B. C. 1, then evidently the desolation ended 535¼ years B. C.

As to the methods of counting, Encyclopaedia Britannica says, "Astronomers denote the year which preceded the first of our era as 0 and the year previous to that as B. C. 1—the previous year B. C. 2, and so on."

Whichever of these ways we undertake to calculate the matter the difference between the results is one year. The seventy years of Jewish captivity ended October, 536 B. C., and if there were 536¼ years B. C., then to complete the 2,520 years' cycle of the Times of the Gentiles would require 1913¾ years of A. D., or to October, 1914. But if the other way of reckoning were used, then there were but 535¼ years of the period B. C., and the remainder of the 2,520 years would reach to A. D., 1914¾ years, otherwise October, 1915.

Since this question is agitating the minds of a considerable number of the friends, we have presented it here in some detail. We remind the readers, however, that nothing in the

Scriptures says definitely that the trouble upon the Gentiles will be accomplished before the close of the Times of the Gentiles, whether that be October, 1914, or October, 1915. The trouble doubtless will be considerable before the final crash, even though that crash come suddenly, like the casting of a great millstone into the sea. (Rev. 18:21) The parallel between the Jewish harvest and the present harvest would corroborate the thought that the trouble to the full will be accomplished by October, 1915.

OUR CONSECRATION IS UNTO DEATH

Many of our readers will recall our reference to this subject in a sermon preached at Allegheny, Pa., January 11, 1904, and published in the *Pittsburgh Gazette*. We make an extract from that sermon as follows:—

"We find, then, that the Seven Times of Israel's punishment and the Seven Times of Gentile dominion are the same; and that they began with the captivity of Zedekiah, and, as will be seen from the Chart, they terminate with the year 1915. According to the best obtainable evidences on the subject, synchronized with the Scriptural testimony, Zedekiah's captivity took place in October, 605¾ years before A. D. 1. If we will add to this 1914¾ years, we will have the year, October, 1915, as the date for the end of Gentile supremacy in the world—the end of the lease of 2,520 years, which will not be renewed. Instead, he whose right the kingdom is, shall take possession of it. This, therefore, marks when the Lord himself shall assume control of the world's affairs, to end its reign of sin and death, and to bring in the True Light."

There surely is room for slight differences of opinion on this subject and it behooves us to grant each other the widest latitude. The lease of power to the Gentiles may end in October, 1914, or in October, 1915. And the period of intense strife and anarchy "such as never was since there was a nation" may be the final ending of the Gentile Times or the beginning of Messiah's reign. [See Vol. 2, SCRIPTURE STUDIES.]

But we remind all of our readers again, that we have not prophesied anything about the Times of the Gentiles closing in a time of trouble nor about the glorious epoch which will shortly follow that catastrophe. We have merely pointed out what the Scriptures say, giving our views respecting their meaning and asking our readers to judge, each for himself, what they signify. These prophecies still read the same to us. Should we ever see reason for changing our belief, be assured we will be prompt to advise you respecting the same and give you the reason for it. However some may make positive statements of what they know, and of what they do not know, we never indulge in this; but we merely state that we believe thus and so, for such and such reasons.

Many disposed to cavil at every statement of faith respecting the time and ending of this age and the dawning of the new age are very positive in their assertions. Some of them declare that surely the end of this age cannot come for fifty thousand years yet. Others, with equal positiveness, declare that it may happen at any moment. Neither one gives any Scriptural proof. Then why should either of them criticize us for merely presenting the Scripture testimonies and our opinions respecting the signification of them, with the request that others investigate and form each his own opinion?

Finally, let us remember that we did not consecrate either to October, 1914, nor to October, 1915, or to any other date, but "unto death." If for any reason the Lord has permitted us to miscalculate the prophecies, the signs of the times assure us that the miscalculations cannot be very great. And if the Lord's grace and peace be with us in the future as in the past, according to his promise, we shall rejoice equally to go or to remain at any time, and to be in his service, either on this side the veil or on the other side, as may please our Master best.

ADVICE TO PILGRIMS, GOOD FOR ALL

TO THE PILGRIM BRETHREN OF I. B. S. A.

DEAR BRETHREN, BELOVED IN THE LORD:—I know well that as new creatures your desires are to lay down your life for the brethren. I know well, also, that the world, the flesh and the adversary (especially the latter) evidently oppose all who seek to walk in the footsteps of Jesus, particularly those in public places and those who are active in the service of the truth. These attacks come sometimes in one form and sometimes in another—sometimes through too much sympathy and sometimes through too little.

I feel constrained to give you some advice:

Do not do much writing of letters. Experience shows that those pilgrims who do much of this generally neglect the particular work in which they are supposed to be engaged. If there are questions needing answers, ten words on postcard will refer the friends to THE WATCH TOWER OFFICE, or to STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES. We believe that the results would be far more profitable than if you would attempt to write lengthy discussions. In some instances the friends could be more profited. Is it not wise that we remember St. Paul's exhortation that the eye, the hand, the foot, strive to do its own part as members of the body of Christ? Your portion, dear Brethren, is a very honorable and important one. We believe that it will need all of your time, if properly attended to.

The forenoons, or times when there are no meetings, we advise that brief visits be made to dear friends of whom you get word that they are sick, or for some other reason have not attended meetings of the class recently.

Such opportunities not presenting themselves, we suggest that you write a brief synopsis of your principal address (if you give a public one), suitable for the newspapers. This will be a valuable experience to you and may prove acceptable, and thus give the truth a wider swing. One dear brother has been very successful in this way. Not being much of a hand at writing nor much of a scholar, he inquired of me if he could use some of my sermons. I gave cheerful consent. Rewriting them, he has been able to get them into numbers of papers, and thus the truth has been circulated. We wish to give you all this same privilege.

Do not understand by this that we mean for you to go out of the pilgrim into the literary work, but merely that you seek for opportunities to write up something that may effect the scattering of the truth. The time thus employed would be much more useful in the Lord's service than in writing to the friends.

I remember you, in my petitions at the throne of heavenly grace and hope that I am remembered by you all. Remember me to the dear friends wherever you may go, assuring them that you bear my greetings. As ever,

Yours in the Fellowship of the Anointed,

C. T. RUSSELL.

SUGGESTIONS FOR BEREAN CLASSES

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:—

In sending current report to Tabernacle I feel constrained to express anew my hearty Christian love for you, as I perceive the activity of our opponents increasing in their efforts to overthrow the work committed to you. You have our prayers, as well as our sympathy, in the trials incidental to the various attacks being made in the public press against you. I feel confident the same grace which has held you up in the past will prove sufficient to the end.

Most of the classes seem to be leaping forward in the things of the Spirit, as though trying to make amends for past slackness.

I notice a few classes making the serious mistake of thinking a constant change is essential to "keep from getting into a rut." Thus in one class the Lord evidently saw a more competent leader was needed, and he sent a brother to work here who had the necessary qualifications. After serving two six months' terms that spirit of change refused to elect him, or, rather, prompted him to think he ought not to be elected again. The present elder is a good brother, but the two as elders together would be able to accomplish manifold more.—Eccle. 4:9-12.

That same idea causes this class to shift its meetings around, even including the Sunday services, until some of the irregular attendants are discouraged from going out for fear they will go to one home and find the meeting is not to be held there. That is one reason why they never become regular attendants.

Another thing, some of the classes need advice upon the conduct of Berean classes, as quite a few places where they think they have Berean classes they really have preaching services. The elder asks the questions, one or two of the friends give a very brief answer, and then the elder preaches a 10 or 15-minute sermon; this is repeated with next question, and so to the end.

There are some very small and weak classes where I can

imagine this might be allowable, but in every case where I have found it to be their method there seemed to be no excuse for it.

We have been enjoying very precious fellowship with the Brethren in Illinois, and are greatly rejoicing in the privileges of service in the cause which has as its object the glory of God. With much Christian Love.

Yours in His Precious Name, BENJ. H. BARTON.

THE EDITOR'S REPLY

I embrace this opportunity to endorse the statement of Brother Barton, given above. We need to keep well balanced. While the classes are to retain the full control of their own affairs, this does not mean that they should ever speak or thing slightingly of those whom they have chosen, under what they believe to be divine guidance, to be their elders or leaders. Let us remember the Apostle's words, "Obey those who have the rule over you, and submit yourselves, for they watch for your souls as they that must give account."—Heb. 13:17.

A faithful leader, who does not attempt to take the control from the hands of the class, can be, and should be, trusted greatly. His is a labor of love, and not for filthy lucre; and the love of the whole class should be freely paid to him as in a measure a reward for his faithfulness in the service. This does not mean that the control should be left in the hands of one elder, nor that he should feel offended that others should be brought to the front, even if he be the most competent one. As elder brethren the leaders should be on the lookout to help, encourage and instruct all the younger brethren, and to prepare them for the work of deacon, and, subsequently, for eldership.

Some of the Lord's dear people seem a little inclined to run to the extreme. Strong characters are always in danger of going to extremes. The Apostle exhorts, "Let your moderation be known to all." To have our affairs conducted decently and in order is not Babylonish in any evil sense. Can we imagine heaven as without rules, regulations and order? Do we not recognize that order is heaven's first law? Does not the Apostle intimate that the Lord is setting the various members in the body as it pleases him? Could it be wrong for us to co-operate with God in the recognition of his will and in carrying it out? Surely not! It is just as bad, or even worse, for a small minority to tyrannize over the majority as it would be for a reasonable majority to tyrannize over the minority. The spirit of love bids us remember the Golden Rule, and be as generous to others as we would have them be to us.

I quite agree with Brother Barton's suggestions respecting too great a desire for change. Recently we learned of one class which rotates its leaders every week. This would not be so bad, of course, for prayer and testimony meeting, though even then it would appear as if a month or a quarter would be better for each leader; but in the case of the Berean Studies a weekly change seems very injurious, both for the leader and for the class. Continuity, connection with previous lessons, is very desirable. We recommend at least three months' incumbency for Berean Study leaders.

RESPECTING BEREAN STUDIES

Brother Barton's suggestion is good, that a successful teacher is one who draws the answers from the class. It is in this very particular that the Berean Studies are helping the Lord's people more and more. Now, it is true that some persons who have a talent for talking or preaching have insufficient talent for teaching—for drawing answers from the class. In such a case it might be well to give different elders an opportunity to show whether they possess aptness to teach, which the Apostle explains to be one of the qualifications of an elder.

Many class leaders report that it is impossible for them to get the friends to study the lesson in advance. It is a pity that this is so, but it would not be wise to cause offense to any or to hinder any from attending the meetings by berating them for failure to study the lessons. We advise another course: At the beginning of each study let the pages of Studies in the Scriptures referred to in the lesson be read by some one capable of reading clearly, distinctly, forcefully; and then shut the books and discuss the subject along the lines of the questions. A very helpful way is for the leader to assist by gathering up some of the fragmentary statements of an answer and helping to put them together. The effect is to encourage the answerers for another occasion and to make the answers more valuable for the time. On the whole, the Berean Studies, we are sure, are doing very effective work in grounding and establishing in the truth.

We urge all the dear brethren that they keep up the regular reading of the STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES, ten to twelve pages a day, wholly regardless of the Berean lessons. What will be read will be so much of aid in connection with the lesson studies.

WISDOM FOR HARD TIMES

Many people are wasteful without intending to be so. They do not know how to economize. Economy is less important to the rich than to the poor, yet the poor usually know nothing about true economy. Economy does not signify always the purchase of that which is cheapest, nor does it mean to purchase in various small quantities sparingly. In view of the possibilities of the near future we believe that "a word in season" will be helpful. Our advise would be to keep a good supply of fuel ahead, as storms and accidents might materially interrupt the supply—not to speak of strikes, embargoes, etc.

But our particular message now is in respect to food. We advise a fair supply of staple goods which do not run into money—rice, beans, peas, oatmeal, potatoes, salt, sugar. What we have enumerated are staples. Bought in reasonable quantities, they are the cheapest, as well as the most wholesome food. The rice and the potatoes are rich in starch, while the beans and peas are richly nitrogenous and largely take the place of meats in support of the human system.

Meat in moderate quantities is wholesome and desirable, but not indispensable where beans and peas are used freely. However, certain portions of beef are sold cheap everywhere, the objection usually being that the cheap portions are tough. We want to give our readers a recipe, by the use of which they can always have tender meat, even though they buy the cheapest and toughest.

The recipe is the use of a small quantity of the best vinegar in the preparation of the meat. Press the tough pieces of meat tightly into a jar, and put just enough water on it to cover it. Note the quantity of water used, and allow two teaspoonfuls of vinegar to a pint of water—a tablespoonful to a quart, and in same proportion for larger quantities. Let this vinegar and water remain upon the meat over night. In the morning cook your meat in whatever way you may please, and it will be tender. The same treatment will make the toughest fowls tender. If the vinegar is not quite good and strong, a larger quantity will be needed. In frying steak, a teaspoonful of vinegar put into a large frying-pan will give the steak a spicy flavor and make it tender. WATCH TOWER readers need never have tough meat hereafter.

DISCIPLINE

The hammer of thy discipline, O Lord,
Strikes fast and hard. Life's anvil rings again
To thy strong strokes. And yet we know 'tis then
That from the heart's hot iron all abroad
The rich glow spreads. Great Fashioner divine,
Who spareth not, in thy far-seeing plan,
The blows that shape the character of man,
Or fire that makes him yield to touch of thine,
Strike on, then, if thou wilt! For thou alone
Canst rightly test the temper of our will,
Or tell how these base metals may fulfill
Thy purpose—making all our life thine own.
Only we do beseech thee, let the pain
Of fiery ordeals through which we go
Shed all around us such a warmth and glow,
Such cheerful showers of sparks in golden rain,
That hard hearts may be melted, cold hearts fired,
And callous hearts be taught to feel and see
That discipline is more to be desired
Than all the ease that keeps us back from thee.

AN INTERESTING LETTER

PASTOR RUSSELL:—May I write you my joyful experience in which our dear Father so clearly used you and a tract.

In 1879 I joined a church in a small town where the religious atmosphere seemed to be good. After some years I moved to a city and at once I identified myself with the church there. I soon noticed the absence of the simplicity

of religion, and the prevalence of form and ceremony, including many kinds of entertainments to raise money. I grew dissatisfied; and though still loyal to the creed, I only attended the services intermittently.

Last August while homeward bound on the car I sat beside a lady who quietly handed me a folded PEOPLES PULPIT asking me that I read it and pass it on to others. Simply because her quiet manner attracted me I said "Yes." I did not think of the paper for several days and then felt too busy to take the time. This occurred several times until finally I remembered my promise to the woman and read the article "Where are the Dead" aloud to my companion.

Finding the STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES advertised therein she purchased them for me as a present.

From the beginning our hearts and minds accepted all from cover to cover, because the Bible was clearly proving them. Oh, the years of heart hunger; and never to have heard of the STUDIES nor the truth!

Later in the Spring we heard you in Boston and Malden.

I now have all the STUDIES, BEREAN NOTES, WATCH TOWER, etc. Truly much has come to us in one year—the satisfying of the longing of a lifetime. May the dear Father abundantly bless "the faithful steward;" and the dear unknown sister in the truth who first gave me the PULPIT. In her longing to help one she helped two; and I anxiously give out PULPITS to others, as she asked, "pass it on." This at present seems all I can do.

I gladly and prayfully take the vow trusting to the Father's sustaining grace to keep it.

NELLIE J. WENTWORTH.

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1912—ANNUAL REPORT—1912

WATCH TOWER BIBLE AND TRACT SOCIETY

DECEMBER 1ST, 1911—DECEMBER 1ST, 1912

Our fiscal year begins and ends December 1. The year has been one of the most interesting and successful in our Society's experience. Every day has seemed to add momentum to the work. Those who have been enjoying the light of present truth for years seem generally to be ripening in Christian character and in loving zeal for the Lord, the truth and the brethren. Nothing pleases us more than this.

The next most interesting thing is the manifest awakening of thinking Christian people of all denominations. Many dear people of God have lived in a sort of religious lethargy for years. Sometimes they dreamed of converting the world, only to be rudely awakened to a fresh realization that if the heathen were brought to the same civilization that prevails in Christendom, God's will would be as far as ever from being done on earth as in heaven. Others have had nightmares of horror as their minds would be recalled to the teachings of their creeds —as they would remember the old theory that all except the saintly elect few will spend an eternity in torture.

The awakening ones very generally wander off into "Higher Criticism" unbelief, Evolution theories, and general doubt respecting everything. Others wander into Christian Science, and seek to convince themselves that aches and pains are purely imagination, etc., etc. Still others wander into New Thought, etc., only to find, in these, dangerous quicksands. Under the Lord's providence many or all these classes during the past year have been brought in contact with the Bible's own teaching, which we all have so long lost under the debris of human theory and tradition.

It has been a real pleasure to note, as the weeks went by, the increased attendance at the meetings and the increased number of meetings being held and the development of faithful brethren everywhere as heralds of the "good things." It has been a great satisfaction to read some of the warmly encouraging letters that have been received from hungry souls. Some tell of the sweetness of the truth at its very first hearing. Others tell of how increasingly precious the Word of God grows, as their study of it continues in the light of the divine plan of the ages. Surely THE WATCH TOWER is the favored place for a review of the entire harvest field!

The Lord has greatly blessed the brethren who have engaged in Class Extension work, especially in Great Britain and America. There is room in this Department for the talents of every consecrated child of God. The harvest is great. The laborers are few. All who are praying to the Lord to send forth more laborers are surely zealously watching for opportunities to take a hand in the work themselves. And all this energy is showing fruitage. There is nothing like it in the whole world. No money inducements! Everything is done from the love of the Lord and his truth, and from a great desire to "show forth the praises of him who hath called us out of darkness into his marvelous light." The blessing is twofold. Not only are many thus brought into the light and caused to rejoice in the fullness of our Savior and his great salvation, but the laborers all receive spiritual refreshment, in proportion as they seek to lay down their lives and talents in the harvest work.

THE TRUTH IN FOREIGN FIELDS

Our readers are aware that our Society has been doing something in South Africa and South India during the past three years. Evidently the Lord's blessing in some degree on the work in foreign lands led up to the sending of an I. B. S. A. Committee to see the conditions of the heathen and to report. The report was given in the early part of the year, and published in a special issue of this journal. We have received complimentary testimonies respecting the truthfulness of the Report and the kindly spirit with which those truths, not altogether flattering, were presented. Some of these have come from foreign lands.

As a result of that investigation it was decided that conditions in heathendom warranted the expenditure of some of the Society's funds in proclaiming the Gospel of the Kingdom there. Accordingly, free literature was printed in six of the principal languages of India, the two principal languages of China, in the Japanese and in the Korean. This literature was designed principally for those professing Christ. But reports indicate that many non-Christians have manifested eagerness for the study of these things.

The Bible story of the election of the church to be joint-heirs with Jesus in the Messianic kingdom was new and palatable to many of the Christian natives and others; and the Bible assurance presented to them, that their friends and forefathers who have died in heathenish darkness were not in purgatory nor a hell of eternal torture, but in the Bible hell, the grave, was a relief to many. God's character, cleared of the awful stain upon it by our creeds, shone more brightly before the minds of many. We may be sure that the effect on honest hearts everywhere is the same; namely, that "the Love of God constraineth us."

THE WORK IN SOUTH INDIA

In South India, where the London Missionary Society has had a start for over a hundred years, where it has established colleges, etc., the field seemed ripe for the Gospel of the kingdom which we sent to them. As the people heard and read of the good time coming, it cheered them. According to the reports, the missionaries endeavor to keep the people from hearing, even threatening to excommunicate those who attend our meetings, and, going further than this, threatening to excommunicate whole families if even one member attends our meetings. And further, they are reported to have declared that they would not allow any marrying between any of their faithful and any who might come to hear and have a relish for the "good tidings of great joy which shall be for all people." But in spite of all the threats and endeavors and influence and rice, the hungry hearts came to our meetings and got some crumbs of comfort, benefiting in the present life and preparing them, we trust, for the life to come.

The latest reports from South India are that the missionaries of that vicinity, unable to stem the popularity of our Bible meetings, have been obliged to start similar Bible instruction respecting the kingdom. Well, whether it be from strife or from some other motives, we are glad that Messiah's kingdom is being heralded to whoever will be "Israelites indeed" of far-off India.

If the missionaries would all preach the Gospel of the kingdom, if they would all tell the people the Bible truth respecting "the wages of sin" and "the gift of God," the coming of Messiah, the rolling away of the curse and the pouring out of God's blessing, and announce that this grand consummation of the divine plan is near at hand, how glad we would be! If now our efforts have stirred them up to give the people the real Bible message, we are glad.

Undoubtedly there are sincere missionaries, but such sincere ones are hampered and hindered by the limitations placed upon them respecting the creeds——burdens which are becoming galling to all "whom the Son makes free." But with the missionary, as with the home pastor of civilized lands, every

one seems bound up in his congregational fetters. Only the courageous "overcomers" could even think of bursting the bonds which associate them with their food supply, their honor of men, and all opportunity they know for divine service. We sympathize with such. Would that they might take a more satisfactory course! Would that they might exercise more faith in God!

If the ministers have much advantage every way as respects education, time, opportunity for study, etc., they are also having weightier trials, because any change of denominational base to them means practically their all. Few of them realize that this is the very test which the Lord wishes to bring to bear upon every one called during this Gospel age—faithfulness, loyalty, zeal for God and his truth—even unto death, counting not their lives dear to themselves. It is of this class that it is written, "They shall be mine, saith the Lord, in that day when I make up my jewels."—Mal. 3:17.

THE NEWSPAPER WORK

Very encouraging reports come to us respecting the influence of the truth as it goes out from week to week through the public press of the English-speaking world. Approximately fourteen hundred newspapers are publishing our sermons and Sunday School comments every week. Our adversary, God's adversary, Satan, is, of course, displeased now, as he was eighteen hundred years ago, to perceive that "the poor have the Gospel preached unto them." Yet notwithstanding slanders, misrepresentations and violent attacks made by some, God's blessing continues with the work; and approximately twelve millions of people have the opportunity every week of learning a little respecting God and his Word—his plan.

One would think that every true Christian in every pulpit, in every pew, would thank God that the people whom they could not get into the churches are having the message of God's love laid before their eyes in an attractive form weekly. It would be a pity if anything akin to jealousy should anywhere spring up to poison a Christian heart against a fellow-Christian and fellow-servant. Any one engaged in sowing such seed and planting such roots of bitterness would assuredly have divine disfavor for his portion in some manner. But our point is, that, by the grace of God, the Gospel is preached. Earnest souls are being found. Hungry ones are being fed and made to rejoice. God is being glorified.

Let us be thankful to have any share in this great work. More and more it appeals to us to be the Lord's work. We cannot see how it could progress so marvelously as it has done, except under his blessing. We give him our thanks. What if it has stirred up here and there an evil spirit in a class which the Bible describes as "sons of Belial"? What if these do fulfil toward us the Word of the Lord which declares, Whoever of you will live godly shall suffer persecution?

What if we do receive from some revilings, slanders, persecutions? Did not the Master forewarn us that this would be a part of our wages, saying, "They shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake? Rejoice, and be exceeding glad, for great is your reward in heaven; for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you." St. Paul, who suffered not only from the tongues of men, but also from their whips, declared that present experiences were light afflictions, when viewed from the standpoint of the glory that is to follow as a reward of faithful endurance.

The proper way to view such experiences is to call to mind the blessed revenge which soon we shall be fitted and prepared to mete out to our enemies. In the language of the Scriptures, we shall by and by heap coals of fire upon the heads of those who now persecute us, by blessing them, opening the eyes of their understanding and helping them onward and upward to greater knowledge of God and harmony with his gracious arrangements. That is the kind of revenge that God is preparing for those who now so grievously misrepresent him and his Word—ignorantly.

Let us be assured that ignorance rather than malevolence is at the foundation of opposition to the truth. It was so at the first advent. Many of those Scribes and Pharisees and chief priests were fairly decent people. They had theories of their own respecting God's plan—as to how it must be fulfilled. Their own plans seemed better than God's because they were worldly-minded—not "Israelites indeed"—at heart.

Cannot very similar things be said truthfully and kindly respecting many of the ecclesiastically prominent in the present harvest time? If so, instead of thinking too harshly, let us rather take our cue from St. Peter's words when, speaking under the influence of the holy Spirit, he said to repentant Jews, "I wot, brethren, that in ignorance ye did it, as did also your rulers"; and St. Paul's words, "for, had they known, they would not have crucified the Lord of Glory."

So ignorance is the excuse for much of the wrong that has been done in the world amongst those bearing the name of Christ during the past eighteen centuries. And the same is true today. It behooves us while seeking to rid ourselves of ignorance and to come to a clear knowledge of the truth, to have sympathy for those whose eyes of understanding are still more or less blinded by "the god of this world." Let us pray for such, as St. Paul did, saying, "I pray God for you that the eyes of your understanding opening, ye may be able to comprehend with all saints the height and the depth, the length and the breadth—and to know the love of God, which passeth all understanding."—Eph. 1:18; 3:18, 19.

THE WATCH TOWER LISTS

Post Office rulings require us to keep our subscription lists very clean. When subscriptions expire, but a short time can be left for renewals. This insures that our list is quite a live one. For several years we have been urging the friends that, instead of lending their papers to interested friends, they encourage them to become subscribers to The Watch Tower and to the papers publishing the sermons. Friends of the Cause have provided a special Fund out of which any such subscriptions can be paid, so that poverty need not be a hindrance to the receiving of a regular supply of spiritual food.

In various ways we know that our list still represents only the smaller portion of those really interested in the harvest message. The list, however, is gradually growing. Many of you will be glad to know that we are now publishing thirty-five thousand or more copies at every issue. We wish we dared hope for an increase of fifteen thousand or more during the coming year. The matter is in your hands. If you are receiving a blessing through these channels, and if you desire to extend the blessings to others, be sure you properly advise them.

THE PILGRIM SERVICE

The Lord continues his blessing with the pilgrim service. It is not the Society's desire to supply regular preaching for the classes or in any manner to relieve them of the responsibility for their own spiritual upbuilding. The frequent supply of pilgrims, therefore, is confined to large cities, where a more public witness than the local class is able to provide seems necessary. Even then, we encourage the classes to continue their regular studies, just as though the pilgrims did not come so frequently.

Pilgrim visits are intended to serve a double purpose: First, to assist in giving from time to time public witnesses for the truth—but preferably only one or two public discourses at each visit; second, the coming of a pilgrim affords excellent opportunity for refreshing and strengthening the household of faith. They may be called upon to help unravel knotty questions which may arise, although there will generally be found in every class some familiar enough with the Studies in the Scriptures to give a Scriptural answer to nearly every important question.

Many classes of Bible Students have written us that by vote they have chosen the Editor of this journal as their Pastor (under-shepherd or bishop). We suggest to such that the pilgrim brethren be considered in a general way our assistants, and that they be received accordingly. This does not mean that the lessons they give, the spiritual food which they present, should be received carelessly or without proper mastication.

Rather, the Lord would have all of his dear sheep use their consecrated minds in rightly dividing the Word of truth, giving special heed to the suggestion and expositions of those whom they have reason to believe are serving them according to the will of God. This advice would be applicable to the presentations of the pastor or the pilgrims or the local elders—everybody.

Whenever public meetings are thought to be desirable, remember that one of the chief necessities for such an occasion is the procurement of a desirable auditorium—clean and in good repute. In many respects opera houses or small theaters of good class are more desirable than churches, because people of all denominations and those who attend no church services will feel free to come. The friends are gradually learning that it is useless to invite intelligent people to a meeting held in a dingy place or more than one flight of stairs from the street level. They are learning, too, the necessity for advertising meetings when they have good halls.

For success, the three things must co-operate—a speaker of ability, a desirable auditorium and the meeting well advertised. In the past much advertising effort has been wasted by poor auditoriums. Where notified that a public meeting is desired the Society will, as far as possible, apportion Sundays—especially if the town is of reasonable size and if the promises in respect to auditorium, etc., are encouraging. Increase of wisdom along these lines is helping forward the work in every direction. These same remarks apply in a lesser degree to Class Extension work, by which we mean meetings

held in surrounding villages and towns by those elders who have talent for public speaking and whose services are not needed by the local class sending them forth. The Society has had the pleasure of co-operating along these lines during the year. The results are encouraging every way. All classes that have the talent to spare and that have not engaged in this Extension work should write to us for particulars at once. This work is in harmony with the Master's instruction, Pray the Lord of the harvest that he will send forth more laborers into his vineyard. Let us labor while we pray.—Matt. 9:38.

SUMMARY PILGRIM SERVICE.

Total number of ministers engaged	60
" " " cities and towns visited	5,788
" " " public meetings	3,683
" " in attendance	564,707
Semi-public meetings held	9,881
Total number in attendance	248,293
" miles traveled	622,373

BIBLE STUDY CLASS EXTENSION.

Number of meetings reported	3,595
Attendance at meetings	108,563
Number of copies "Everybody's Paper" and other announcements circulated	1,732,870
Reported cost of these meetings	$9,389.02
Amount supplied by the Society	$1,003.18

THE CORRESPONDENCE DEPARTMENT

Naturally, our correspondence increases every year. However, a change is noticeable in the character of the communications. Those who have been long on our list are asking fewer questions, finding that they have the answers already in THE WATCH TOWER and in the six volumes of STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES. But our clerical force is still busily engaged in replying to questions from beginners, who have received of our literature and desire further spiritual nourishment. Herewith we present to you a memorandum of the number of letters received and the number dispatched. All parts of the earth are represented in our mail.

Total letters received 1912—Brooklyn	143,756
Total letters dispatched 1912—Brooklyn	264,190

THE COLPORTEUR WORK

It amazes us that the sale of STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES continues as it does. Colporteurs report to us that with the new method they are using they can generally sell the entire set of six volumes as easily as they formerly sold one volume or three volumes. The general awakening amongst Christian people is permitting many of them to become enlightened, preparing them for the Truth. They are satisfied neither with the darkness of the past, nor with the unbelief of Higher Criticism or Evolution. A soul-hunger is abroad in the world—with an increasing number of people. We thank God that we have for them the true Bread of Life, of which both they and we have so long sung.

"It satisfies my longings
As nothing else can do."

The number of volumes of STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES, etc., circulated during the year, we here report with considerable satisfaction. We congratulate especially all the dear colporteurs. Nearly all of these books were sold by them.

The total number of volumes of STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES circulated in 1912 was 634,951.

FREE LITERATURE CIRCULATED

Our two little papers, PEOPLES PULPIT and EVERYBODY'S PAPER, circulated for the most part free, have gone far and wide this year in thirty-three different languages. The friends, our readers, knowing that they can have literature in any language, are more and more availing themselves of the privilege and seeking to interest their neighbors. Incidentally we remark that the majority of people can serve the Lord's cause much better by handing a tract with a few commendatory words than by seeking to explain the divine plan. So many forget in telling of God's glorious plan that their hearers are comparatively ignorant of it—that they know only the first principles of the Gospel of Christ, and have need that one teach them again the rudiments. A teacher must be wise and give only the kind and only the quantity that will nourish.—Heb. 5:12-14.

Too many make a mistake, choking their friends with strong meat. Others make the mistake of talking too boastfully and drawing unpleasing comparisons, saying, What you believe, and, What we believe. We are glad, however, that all are gradually learning the import of the Master's words, "Be ye wise as serpents, harmless as doves." Let us remember that we not long ago were in similar darkness to that which generally prevails—and still we were Christians.

Hence we should not, in talking to our friends, give any hint that they do not belong to the family of God. Rather we find it the much better way to class ourselves in with all as true neighbors, to acknowledge that once we were in darkness, and to express the thought that all Christian people are becoming more and more enlightened in respect to the teaching of God's Word, because we are now living in God's due time for revealing some of the secrets of God's glorious plan of the ages. We are now living in the time of which the Prophet Daniel declared, "The wise shall understand"—the wise virgin class.—Dan. 12:10; Matt. 25:1-3.

TRACTS DISTRIBUTED, INCLUDING EVERYBODY'S PAPER AND PEOPLE'S PULPIT

November 1, 1911, to November 1, 1912.

In the English language	34,672,475 copies
In all other languages	848,000 "
Grand total of tracts	35,520,475 "

Equaling in usual tract pages.....481,632,950 pages

The above does not include the millions published in Great Britain and Australia nor in foreign languages.

FINANCIAL REPORT

As we look back over the past, we perceive a steady progress in the amount of money donated to the Tract Fund for the promulgation of the truth. Each year has shown a little better than its predecessor, and the present one is no exception to this rule. Remember, too, that few of our donations are large—that not many WATCH TOWER subscribers have much of this world's goods. Two things astonish our enemies and our friends:—

(1) While all denominations of Christendom are in distress because of increased expenditure and decreased contributions and because they are ashamed to beg more than they have done, our receipts, on the contrary, without solicitation, come gradually forward, apparently just as they are needed. Or rather, we should say, keeping within our receipts we are enabled to push the work a little more and a little more every year. Of course, we could do much more if we had more means; but we are not worried about that, for if the Lord desires us to do greater things, he is abundantly able to provide the means.

(2) The other point which surprises both our enemies and our friends is the large amount of work accomplished with the small amount of money expended. This is attributed to the fact that we pay no salaries, and all of our expenses are kept at a minimum. Our home and office force of over a hundred persons all labor diligently, earnestly, perseveringly, rendering their services as unto the Lord. We have no drones. All are provided for decently, comfortably, as, we believe, the Lord would be pleased with, but very inexpensively. This is one secret of our ability to do more than others with the same amount of money. Financial statement follows:—

Paid Shortage of 1911		$ 22,415.93
Receipts from "Good Hopes," Tract Fund, etc.	$200,767.51	
Expended in the work mentioned above:		
In the United States and Canada		134,228.43
" Great Britain		20,038.60
" Austria		4,663.97
" Germany		1,562.12
" Sweden		1,338.04
" Denmark and Norway		1,059.52
" South Africa		1,298.77
" Jamaica and South America		3,933.69
" Japan		2,300.00
" China		2,300.00
" Korea		2,028.62
" India		1,723.19
" France, Italy and Switzerland		343.67
" Greece		240.00
" Hungary and Poland		471.29
" Philippine Islands		157.95
Cash balance on hand		663.72
	$200,767.51	$200,767.51

We will not here mention particularly the outlook for the future, but will leave that for next issue. We thank God for the privileges and blessings of the year closing, and rejoice with you all that by his grace we have had the privilege of his service. Let us press forward,

"Still achieving, still pursuing."

Let us not be fearful of the great adversary's roar, when, like a roaring lion, he would seek to intimidate us. "Be of good

courage and he shall strengthen thine heart." "He who has begun a good work in us is able to complete it. "He knoweth our frame and remembereth that we are dust." He will not suffer us to be tempted above that we are able, but will, with every temptation, provide a way of escape.—1 Cor. 10:13.

"Judge not the Lord by feeble sense,
But trust Him for His grace;
Behind a frowning providence
He hides a smiling face.

"Ye fearful saints, fresh courage take;
The clouds ye so much dread
Are big with mercy and shall break
In blessings on your head."

THE PHILOSOPHY OF OUR DAILY EXPERIENCES

"If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not?"—Heb 12:7.

All chastenings are testings, but all chastenings are not necessary punishments. We should judge of the purpose of our experiences by self-examination, that we may ascertain whether in our conduct there has been something out of harmony with the Father's will. In every case our experience is a test of our loyalty of heart—as to our willingness to learn the lessons which the Lord is seeking to teach us and our recognition of the source from which they come.

The trials and difficulties of the consecrated child of God are not to be esteemed as the results of divine carelessness or indifference in regard to his interests, but rather as the outworkings of divine providence in his behalf. Those who can see the matter from this viewpoint are thus enabled to learn some of life's most helpful lessons, and are thereby prepared for the glorious future which God has arranged for those who faithfully carry out their covenant of sacrifice.

Ordinarily the word chastisement is used to signify correction for wrongdoing. But in the Bible, it is especially used to convey the thought of discipline or instruction in righteousness. Sometimes we use it in this way in the ordinary affairs of life. If we sin, we receive punishment indeed. But those who are trying to do right are continually receiving discipline of the Lord. There is a purpose in this training, or chastisement. The church is learning how to build character pleasing in the Father's sight, to be well qualified for particular service; and discipline is the means employed for that instruction.

If a man were about to train a dog for the circus, he would first choose the right kind of animal for that special service. He would not think of selecting any chance poodle that might come to hand, but would find a dog that was capable of being taught. In carrying out his course of instruction, he might find it necessary to chastise the dog in order to teach him some trick. This would not mean that the animal was bad, surly or vicious, but that there was no other way by which he could learn. An animal that was being fitted to guard the house would not need the same training that was necessary for the dog that was to perform in public. The watch-dog must know how to guard property; but the animal that is to jump through hoops, etc., must be trained carefully by those who have in mind his future career.

So with the church. They need practical lessons in character-development of a very high order, and consequently they are receiving experimental knowledge such as no other creatures in the universe receive. Because they are trying to live righteously, trying to please the Heavenly Father, they are being chastened for instruction, that they may be fully conformed to the divine will, that they may lay aside their own preferences, that they may not do their own will, but that of the Lord.

Such experiences are not for mankind in general. Such experiences were not given to Adam. He was required to live merely in harmony with his environment and to be obedient to the Heavenly Father. Such experiences are not for the angels. They are required merely to live righteously, to avoid sin and to use their bodies in harmony with the divine purposes of their creation. They occupy such positions as are natural to them. Therefore the angels have never required chastisements.

SUFFERING DEVELOPS CHARACTER OF A HIGH ORDER

With those, however, who are to be associated with the Redeemer and ultimately to be exalted to the divine nature and glory, it is necessary that they make special manifestations of loyalty, of self-abasement and of self-sacrifice. What was true of Christ is also true of the church, which is his body, and which he purchased with his own precious blood. (Col. 1:24; Acts 20:28) We are called to follow in his footsteps; hence every son whom the Father receives is chastised.—Heb. 12:6, 7.

Every child of God will need chastening. If we wander from the paths of righteousness, we are chastened to bring us back; but even if we did not wander, we should still need chastisement, that we might learn obedience. Our Lord himself learned obedience by the things which he suffered. (Heb. 5:8) Of St. Paul the Lord said, "I will show him how great things he must suffer for my name's sake." (Acts 9:16) The Apostle was put through disciplinary experiences because he was a favored child of God.

We revert to our illustration of the dog under training for a special purpose. The dog must yield himself submissively to his teacher. Another dog that was watching the process by which the one was being trained might think that he was suffering unnecessary hardship, and might feel that if it were himself, he would assert his rights and not suffer so much. But in the end the trained animal would prove to be the more valuable, for the one that had escaped the suffering would remain only a commonplace dog.

So it is with the church. There are people who say of us, "Those who endeavor to do God's will suffer more than do those who do not try; we do not care to undertake any such experience." These people may succeed in having fewer trials in the present life, but they will have blessings of a lower order in the world to come, when the faithful church will be glorified with her Lord and Head.

These experiences with trouble are the very tests of character necessary for our development. The reason why some of the consecrated will get into the great company is that they have not had enough determination—enough strength of character. In the time of trouble, such will either develop that strength by faithfulness under severe trial or they will go into the second death.

The great company class are loyal in heart or they would not be in that class. But they are willing to compromise; and because of this willingness to do so, they weaken their character. In order to be overcomers they must develop this element of character at any cost.

Let us be thankful that we are of those who appreciate the privilege of being trained in the School of Christ—of suffering with him now and of reigning with him by and by. In this school we are learning valuable lessons of experience. Here we receive chastisements, many of which are not punishments for sins, but preparation for the work of the next age. Let us remember that unless we are willing to learn these lessons and to endure hardness, we shall not be prepared to enter the eternal glory.—2 Tim. 2:3; 1 Pet. 5:10.

All things are ours; for we are Christ's and Christ is God's, and God called Christ to these glorious experiences. (1 Cor. 3:21-23) Whoever does not appreciate the spiritual joys can hardly be expected to endure the present training with patience and thankfulness. We must see something of "the glory that shall follow" (1 Pet. 1:11) in order to realize the necessity of the vicissitudes of the present trial time.

THE ADVERSARY'S TACTICS

"For we are not ignorant of his devices."—2 Cor. 2:11.

As we progress toward the consummation of the harvest, it should not surprise us that in every way the adversary becomes more persistent in his attacks. Opposition to the divine plan of the ages is on the increase everywhere. Slanderous misrepresentations are so unblushingly made as to carry a measure of conviction with them, to the injury of the cause we serve.

What Satan cannot do against the truth along the lines of logic, the Bible and common sense, he seeks to do through slanderous misrepresentations of all who take their stand on the side of truth; and his opposition is incurred usually in proportion to the activity of the servants of the truth. This opposition is to them a trial of faith and of patient endurance. It tests their loyalty to God, to the truth and to the brethren. It becomes, likewise, a test of brotherly love to the household of faith. It does a sifting or separating work. "The Lord your God proveth you."—Deut. 13:3.

The same line of attack furnishes special trials for the church nominal—both wheat and tares. It gives opportunity for exhibitions of envy, anger, malice, hatred, strife, evil-surmising and evil-speaking. Thus many are being tested and their love of unrighteousness is being shown. "By their fruits ye shall know them." (Matt. 7:20) The thorn and brier classes, however closely affiliated with religious things, are not Vine branches. They do not bear the fruit of the Vine, but contrariwise are injurious to the Lord's people. "The poison of asps is under their lips." Some of them are courageous enough to make lies; others, less courageous, love the lies and are mean enough to circulate them. The advance of the Day of the Lord will ultimately reveal the true situation. Some will have shame and contempt, while others will shine as the stars forever and ever.

All who have the Spirit of the Lord, the spirit of meekness, gentleness, patience, long-suffering, brotherly-kindness and love —will be tested, too, along these same lines. The Lord's will for such is that they should deepen and broaden their characters along all these lines in proportion as contrary temptations assail them. Thus more and more will they become copies of God's dear Son, and the trials will assist in making them meet, fit for the kingdom.

ACCUSER OF THE BRETHREN

Another of Satan's devices is to discourage the Lord's faithful disciples who are seeking to know and to do his will. The more conscientious they are, the more subject they will be to Satan's suggestions of unworthiness, rejection, condemnation, second death. God permits this as a test or trial to faith. "Without faith it is impossible to please him." To be developed, faith must be tried with opposition. The more our faith is developed, the more pleasing in the Father's sight we shall be. He would have our faith in himself implicit, unwavering.

The adversary, on the contrary, would destroy our faith. Sometimes he attempts this by misrepresenting God's character as unloving, unjust, unkind, and sometimes by exaggerating our weaknesses and failures, to cause us to cease striving for the goal of divine approval. He would have us give up in despair.

Persons who have been obsessed by evil spirits tell plainly that first of all the spirits personated God and his angels, advised prayer, etc. Afterwards they gave evil suggestions. By and by they gave both good and evil suggestions. The evil suggestions entertained, they would next condemn the individual for having entertained them. Finally all pretense would be dropped, and the individual would be told that he had sinned away all divine favor and was wholly at the mercy of the evil spirits. Then would come suggestions of evil deeds or of suicide, the endeavor being made to drive the individual to a full surrender of his mind, his will, in order to full possession and mental unbalance.

The only remedy for persons in such a deplorable condition is that they exert their will power to oppose all such false suggestions. Nothing is so helpful under such circumstances as correct knowledge of the divine teaching respecting God's love and the abundance of his merciful provision in Christ. Persons in this condition should be encouraged to cast themselves fully and unreservedly at the foot of the cross in the spirit of their minds—in fullness of consecration. Then in proportion to their faith they may lay hold upon the Lord in prayer for complete deliverance from the adversary's power. We know of no other way to get rid of the evil spirits.

There are also cases where the obsession has taken place and where the adversary seems to be able to exercise an evil influence upon the mind, causing doubt, fear, alienation from the Lord. Generally "sin lieth at the door"—some violation of the soul's covenants with the Lord. Such are in danger of great gloom, loss of faith, trust—everything. The cure for their case is a knowledge of God's real character—His great love and sympathy exercised through the Lord Jesus Christ and made available through him to all who give their lives in full consecration.

Faith should triumph, or the light of joy and blessing will die. "According to your faith be it unto you," is the divine rule. Those who will not exercise the faith will never be acceptable to the Father for membership in the kingdom class. Such must wait for the next age and have different experiences. The little flock, the elect ones whom the Lord is now choosing, must all be faith-full.

"THE WICKED ONE TOUCHETH HIM NOT"

The Apostle John declares that a certain course of conduct is possible in which the adversary would be unable to touch us. (1 John 5:18) The picture brought before our mental eyes is that of a charmed circle, within which God's people may come. This circle is not a fence, but merely a line of light, which can easily be overstepped. On the inside of that circle is the Lord's favor. The very center of it is the Lord himself, the Head of the church. The exhortation of the Scriptures, the leadings of the holy Spirit, and the providences of the Lord, all encourage his followers to press to him—"Nearer, my God, to thee."

Outside the charmed circle are the powers of evil. These are sometimes allowed to touch the earthly interests and temporal affairs of the children of the Light; but the demon influence is not permitted to really touch the new creatures in Christ inside this circle. Over that line they cannot exercise their influence. But alas! lured by the world, the flesh and the devil, some of the saints at times go too close to the line, perhaps pursuing some fleshly bait or golden bauble or earthly honor. Such the adversary is ever ready to lay hold of, to drag them out into the darkness of sin, doubt, despair—further and further away from the Lord.

The lesson of this picture to all Spirit-begotten children of God is, "Abide in him," "Abstain from all appearance of evil," "Draw near unto God," "Press onward and upward," "Take heed to yourselves," "Forget the things that are behind," "Mortify your flesh," and earthy desires and ambitions. Keep close to the Master, that "the wicked one touch you not."

But we again remind any who may be touched by the adversary and temporarily ensnared that God is full of loving-kindness, that his mercy endureth forever, for all those who desire to live in harmony with him. While it is true that the nearer we get to the separating line, the nearer do we come within the range of the adversary's influence and power, and the weaker becomes the power of the truth, the Spirit of the Lord, in our control, nevertheless there is joy in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, and the Lord will welcome the strayed sheep, even though he temporarily allow trying experiences. Ultimately to the returning one these experiences will prove valuable lessons, safeguarding against any further tendency to stray or to dally with earthly things.

WHAT CONSTITUTES PURITY OF HEART

"Blessed are the pure in heart; for they shall see God."—Matt. 5:8.

The word pure is a comprehensive term, meaning without adulteration, sincere, unsullied. Purity of heart is purity of motive, of intention, of effort, of will—purity in the sense of transparency, of truthfulness. In other words, Blessed are the honest-hearted—those who have absolutely right intentions. The word heart in this text does not refer to the organ which pumps the blood throughout the system, but to the intention, the will of the man.

In his creation, man was made in the image of God, and so was originally pure in heart—honest, sincere, truthful, perfect in intention; but by reason of the fall from his natural condition, sin and selfishness have developed in his heart, and the Godlike qualities given him in his creation have been to a considerable degree obliterated. While there are many worldly people who to some extent might claim honesty of heart, yet only those who have given themselves to God in full consecration can belong to the class which shall see him.

When one has made a full consecration of himself and has been begotten by the holy Spirit, he is said to have a new heart, a new will, new ambitions, new desires. When the conversion from sin to righteousness is thorough, it may be truthfully said, "Old things have passed away, behold, all things are become new." (2 Cor. 5:17) To accomplish so radical a change requires the operation of a powerful influence—that of the holy Spirit.

Purity of thought, however, does not mean absolute perfection of thought, word and deed. To this condition no member of the fallen race can attain until the beneficent influences of the kingdom shall have restored the race to its original perfection. But to will right, to will perfectly, to be pure in heart, is quite possible; indeed, it is very necessary to all who desire divine approval. The standard set before us, to which our hearts, our wills, must give assent, is the divine standard. "Be ye perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect."—Matt. 5:48.

As long as we are in the flesh, we are obliged to think, to speak and to act through the imperfect medium of the fallen body, whose affections are continually in opposition to the new will and must be resisted. Therefore to perform all that the new will would prompt is sometimes beyond the ability of the Lord's most earnest followers; and all have need that the merit of Christ cover their blemishes, so that the new will, the new

heart, may be judged of the Lord and tested as to its worthiness or unworthiness of eternal life and the attendant blessings which God has promised to the overcomer.

Only the pure in heart have the promise of seeing God. These continue faithful to the end of their pilgrimage; and not only do they attain the character-likeness of the Lord Jesus in their purity of heart intention toward all, but eventually they shall be made like him and "see him as he is," in the glorious change of the first resurrection.—1 John 3:2.

HONORABLE MOTIVES INDICATIVE OF HEART PURITY

When one finds imperfection in himself, when he discovers that he is not up to the glorious standard of righteousness set forth in the Scriptures, when he realizes that he comes short of the glory of God, then it becomes his privilege to seek to amend his conduct. The very act of deciding to do right is the beginning of the process by which one gets a new mind, a new will. This renewing of the mind corresponds to the perfecting of certain organs of the brain.

The will is able to control the whole body. Occasionally there will be opposition from one or another of the lower organs, which will resent the control of the superior ones; but in a general way the will has the mastery. The qualities which constitute the mind were originally a part of the image of God; but all of the powers of the human mind have been injured by the fall of man. All have been more or less weakened.

The organs of veneration, conscientiousness and firmness form a very powerful combination. If these qualities rule the life, the growth of the new mind will be rapid. Whoever has sufficient brain capacity to determine to do right and to serve God to the best of his ability, may, notwithstanding the weakness of his flesh, will to live in accordance with the divine standard. So long as the motives of his new will are honorable, he is pure in heart; and as long as he maintains that condition, he has the assurance that he may ultimately reach perfection through obedience.

In olden times, this purity of heart intention was as much as any one could have. On one occasion, Joshua said, "As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord." (Josh. 24:15) In that statement the old warrior manifested purity of heart—the determination of the mind to serve the Lord. David and all the other ancient worthies had this determination. This was as much as they could do; and therefore, they had this testimony, that they "pleased God."—Heb. 11:5, 6, 39.

Whoever has this determination shall be blessed. He shall one day see the light of God's countenance. If, however, for a season he should fail to maintain this standard, there would be a cloud between him and the Lord. This can be removed only by repentance and forgiveness. Then with the Psalmist he could say, "Return unto thy rest, O my soul; for the Lord hath dealt bountifully with thee."—Psa. 116:7.

During the Gospel age, the people of God may have, not only this purity of heart, or conversion to the Lord, turning to him in fulness of consecration through the precious blood of Christ, but also something more. They may have the divine acceptance of that consecration and the begetting of the holy Spirit. Therefore these are the children of God in a sense peculiar to this age. These may cry, "Abba, Father." (Rom. 8:15) To them, God is not merely the Controller of the Universe, but their Father.

During the Gospel age, the people of God may have special blessings greater than anything previously enjoyed. They have the illuminating power of the holy Spirit, which comes through the divine Word, the divine providences, etc. It requires an illumination of our mental conceptions in order that we may see God. Therefore the church of Christ, who are begotten of the holy Spirit, may see him with the eyes of their understanding in a sense in which the ancient worthies could not.

If we maintain our purity of heart by purity of mind, we may have the assurance of future blessings as well as of present favor and happiness. If this be our course in "the life that now is," we have the Lord's promise that we shall see him in a very special sense in the life "which is to come." We shall be changed to spirit beings and shall see him as he is and shall share his glory. Every one who has this hope within him purifies himself, even as the Lord is pure.—1 John 3:2, 3.

BY ONE MAN'S SIN THE DEATH-CURSE

Genesis 3.—January 19.

"Every one that committeth sin is the bond-servant of sin."—John 8:34.

Adam's first sin brought the penalty specified in this lesson; but it is not the thought that subsequent sins brought other additional penalties. The Bible proposition is that God, having made Adam perfect, required perfect obedience as the condition of his continuance in divine favor and everlasting life. One act of disobedience broke the covenant between God and Adam by which he was treated as a son and guaranteed everlasting life. (Hosea 6:7, Margin) As a sinner he dropped from favor immediately, under the sentence, "Dying thou shalt die."

Nothing that Adam or his children could do subsequently could alter that sentence or recover to him covenant relationship with God. The death penalty was the limit. It could not be increased by any subsequent sins, just as a murderer sentenced to be hanged could not receive a more severe penalty, whether he had committed one murder or a thousand. By a law of nature, heredity, Father Adam transmitted to his race a share of what he possessed, both good and bad. Hence we were all born in sin and "shapen in iniquity; in sin did my mother conceive me."—Psa. 51:5.

As Adam could not increase his penalty, neither can his children. As Adam could not restore himself to covenant relationship with God, neither can his children. But as Adam could, by obedience to the divine law, prolong the process of his dying, so may his children. He was nine hundred and thirty years dying before the death penalty was fully attained. But the impairment wrought by sin has so progressed that many of Adam's children die in infancy, and few can maintain the struggle for existence for a hundred years.

DEATH THE CURSE—NOT TORTURE

Our forefathers during the dark ages, before the day of printing and Bibles and general education, got some strange misunderstandings of the Heavenly Father's character and plan. And their errors of doctrine naturally led them on to errors of conduct, that, to us, are abhorrent. Misunderstanding the Bible to teach that God arranged for the eternal torture of all mankind except a saintly few, the true church, they sought to copy their misconception of Jehovah by torturing their fellow-creatures. Some were stoned, some sawn asunder, some made outcasts, some tortured on the rack, some had their tongues cut out by the roots, some were skinned alive and some were roasted at the stake.

But we must not think of these, our forefathers, as fiendish at heart, but as deceived by what St. Paul calls "doctrines of demons." (1 Tim. 4:1) We sympathize with their godly intentions, but reprobate their devilish procedures. It is because God's people have been gradually getting back nearer and nearer to the teaching of His Word, and its spirit, that the horrible practises of the past are no longer approved. But many have much yet to learn respecting the true plan of God—the true teaching of the Bible. We must be zealous for ourselves and patient with others.

One of the first lessons for us to learn is that the curse which God pronounced against our race is not a sentence to eternal torment at the hands of devils, but plainly and simply, as the Apostle says, "The wages of sin is death." Then he points us to the remedy, a resurrection from death, secured for all through the Redeemer's death at Calvary. The Apostle therefore adds, "But the gift of God is eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord."—Rom. 6:23.

All experience the death penalty, with its weakness, pain, sorrow, tears. All will have an opportunity sometime of learning God's grace in Christ and of manifesting obedience to the divine will and of regaining everlasting life through Messiah's redemptive work and his Millenial kingdom with its restitution. For some, a few, a little flock, who in this age have ears to hear and hearts to obey the Master's voice, God has provided glorious things, far superior to anything that Adam had or lost.

To those who now hear, consecrate, sacrifice their own wills, and walk in Jesus' footsteps, God promises a share in the first resurrection, to glory, honor, immortality, the divine nature. These will constitute the bride class and be joint heirs with the Master as his elect, in his glorious kingdom, which soon is to be established for the rolling away of the curse of sin and death and the lifting up of humanity—of all who will—to all that was lost in Eden and redeemed at Calvary.

THE LESSON OF THIS STUDY

If our Christian forefathers could but properly have studied and appreciated today's lesson, they would have known what

the Bible teaches respecting "the wages of sin," and would soon have seen how seriously public thought had drifted away from the divine testimony to "doctrines of demons." How plain the Scriptural account! How distinctly God forewarned our first parents that the eating of the forbidden fruit would be disobedience and would bring upon them the death penalty!

After they had disobeyed, can we not see the force of the declaration that God drove them out of the Garden of Eden that they might die—that the penalty He pronounced against them might be accomplished? Had they continued in Eden, eating of its life-sustaining fruits, they would have continued to live indefinitely. In order that the sentence of death might be executed upon them, they were driven out and the angel's flaming sword protected the entrance to Paradise.

Moreover, after their expulsion from Eden God explained to our first parents the whole procedure, saying, "Cursed [unfit] is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life; thorns and thistles shall it bring forth unto thee . . . In the sweat of thy face thou shalt eat bread, until thou return unto the ground; . . . for dust thou art and unto dust shalt thou return."—Genesis 3:17-19.

WHY EVIL WAS PERMITTED

The Bible distinctly tells us that God foreknew the fall of man, and that before the foundation of the world, in his purpose, he had provided the Lamb of God to take away the sin of the world and thus to effect ultimately a reconciliation for all of Adam's race desirous of living righteously. God had a glorious purpose interwoven with his permission of sin, which the majority, even of Bible students, evidently but faintly discerned until lately.

The words of Jesus intimate that shortly, before the establishment of his kingdom, his church will be like a company of virgins, all pure and justified, but some of them wise and some of them foolish. He intimates that at that time the wise virgin class will understand features of the divine plan previously kept secret. Evidently we are living in such a time now. It is on this account and not by their own superior wisdom that the wise virgin class is today attaining an appreciation of God's plan, including his reasons for having permitted a reign of sin and death amongst mankind for six thousand years—which is to be abolished by Messiah's reign of righteousness during the seventh great thousand-year day. We may deal with this subject in a later study.

THE TEMPTATION OF EVE

How Lucifer and holy angels became disloyal to God, and how Lucifer acquired the name Satan, or adversary of God, we will inquire into later. In this lesson he is shown as seeking to alienate the affections of our first parents from the Creator, and, by tempting them to do sin, to bring them under the death penalty, that he might enslave them as servants of sin. A spirit being, he would be unseen to Mother Eve, except as he would assume some kind of a material body. It suited his purposes to possess a serpent and through it to tempt Mother Eve.

The serpent doubtless spoke by signs, as we sometimes say, "Actions speak louder than words." The serpent ate of the forbidden fruit in the sight of the woman and then manifested its wisdom, its sagacity. The woman perceived. She craved knowledge. Why had God forbidden that particular fruit? It did not kill the serpent. Why should it kill her? The serpent seemed wise. Why should not that fruit make her more wise? Could it be that God wished to keep them in ignorance and for that reason had forbidden their eating of the fruit?

Such disloyal thoughts should have been promptly spurned. Confidence in their Creator should have been complete. But the insidious poison worked. More and more mother Eve craved knowledge and imagined what wonderful blessings it would bring. She surmised that her husband would not consent, so she ate alone. She was not deceived as respects the wrongdoing, but she was deceived regarding the result. Seeing that the serpent was not poisoned by the fruit, she did not realize that the poison to her was that of disobedience, bringing the death sentence. Father Adam's eating of the fruit was with full knowledge of the result. In love with his wife, he ate knowingly, preferring to die with her rather than to live without her.

THE MARK OF CAIN

GENESIS 4:1-15.—JANUARY 26.

"Whoso hateth his brother is a murderer."—1 John 3:15.

The first tragedy of earth was disobedience to God—the eating of the forbidden fruit. The next generation saw the image of God so marred that murder resulted from a fit of jealousy. Since the Bible teaches that our first parents were perfect, in the image of their Creator, the question arises, How could such noble parentage bring forth a son of Cain's evil disposition? As we look back for six thousand years and consider the reign of sin and death for so long a period, we do not wonder that we see so low and groveling samples of human depravity—some fallen more particularly in one direction and some in another. Some we class as almost entirely devoid of every trace of the divine character, and these we designate "degenerates."

It is not necessary for us to suppose that Cain was "degenerate" in the present day acceptance of that word. Undoubtedly, with so noble a parentage, he must have been a great man in many ways. But he was birthmarked, as we all are, with selfishness. It was after the tragedy of Eden, after their expulsion from Paradise to the unfit earth, after they were cut off from access to the life-sustaining fruits of Eden, after they began to toil with sweat of face battling with thorns and thistles on this earth—it was then that Cain was born. The period of his gestation was surely one of much mental distress to his mother. As she murmured respecting the loss of her Eden home and selfishly coveted it, she doubtless marked her child with discontent and selfishness also.

By the time Abel was born, doubtless our first parents had become more reconciled to their fate and more accustomed to their surroundings. Hence it is fair to suppose that Abel was born under more favorable conditions than Cain. We are not by this argument justifying murder, but we are getting our minds to take sympathetic view of the murderer's case, corresponding to the view God took of it, as expressed in today's study. God reprobated and condemned the sinner, and arranged for his special punishment; but none of his messages to the murderer indicate bitterness or hatred on the part of the Great Judge.

So parents, while correcting their children with necessary severity, should allow no sentiment to have control of their hearts contrary to the love or the best interests and highest welfare of their children. So the laws of men, in dealing with all forms of vice and crime, including murder, should be as swift as righteous judgment will permit and as severe as seems necessary in the interests of society; but those laws should never be vengeful. They should always recognize the fact that all mankind were born in sin, misshapen in iniquity—in sin did our mothers conceive us. Hence, "There is none righteous, no, not one." There is none in whom the original glory of the divine character-likeness persists. The vengeance of the law against the criminal should, therefore, be sympathetically enforced, with a view to warning others against evil-doing, and, so far as reasonably possible, for the reclamation of the culprit.

It is with great satisfaction that we note that in our day this humane spirit is more and more prevalent. Our prisons more and more are being turned into great reformatories, in sharp contrast with the treatment accorded to the vicious in a darker past. The charges of judges in pronouncing sentence against criminals, especially against murderers, are often fatherly and tender. There is even a danger of too much leniency. The feeling that a terrible responsibility is associated with the taking of human life, even in a judicial way, is right; but this feeling—a certain weakness, in fact—is manifesting itself in opposition to capital punishment. This, we believe, is generally the result of misunderstanding the divine Word.

True, in the case of Cain, God did not require an execution of the criminal, but specially prohibited it. Nevertheless, the divine law, as given through Moses, stands: "He that sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed." The careful observance of this law, yet with a spirit of kindness and sympathy, and in the least painful manner, but with proper ignominy, seems necessary to the preservation of law and order. Weakness in this respect encourages criminality and also furnishes an excuse for mob law and mob violence—defiance of every principle of righteousness.

Undoubtedly the general misapprehension of the divine character and plan has led up to the weakness we mention, which opposes capital punishment. This wrong view, which Bible students are gradually finding is not supported by God's Word, led us to believe that the murderer, as one of the non-elect, would at death pass into horrible and endless tortures. Naturally and properly, with that thought in mind, we would hesitate to plunge a fellow-creature into such misery. Bible

students now are learning that we all labored for a time under a delusion, that this delusion came from the dark ages of the inquisition, the block, the stake. Our forefathers, imagining God to be worse than themselves, twisted the Scriptures to support their errors.

Now we see that the Bible teaches that the whole world, good and bad, fall asleep in death and will know no awakening, no joy, no sorrow, until their awakening at the second coming of Messiah, when he will establish his kingdom. "Where the tree falleth, there shall it be." Ah, how much truth and common sense is in the Bible statement that all, good and bad, "sleep with their fathers," gathered to their fathers in death! They are gone to the one great slumber-house, the tomb—sheol, hades—the prison-house of death. From that prison none can break forth, but all the prisoners there are "prisoners of hope."

Messiah so loved the word that he gave his life as a Man for the redemption of Adam and his race. As a result, as soon as he shall have selected His faithful Bride class, he will establish His glorious kingdom. Its mission is to open the prison doors and set at liberty the captives. It will bring all to an accurate knowledge of the Truth. Every wilful transgressor against light and knowledge will then receive stripes. But all evil-doers, as members of the one race, were redeemed by the precious blood, and all must have a full opportunity for deciding willingly, either for harmony with God and everlasting life, or for harmony with sin, and for its penalty—second death.

"SIN CROUCHETH AT THE DOOR"

Before the murder was committed, Cain was vexed, angry, jealous, soured, because God had manifested his favor toward his brother Abel's offering of an animal sacrifice, while rejecting Cain's offering of vegetables. Cain should have rejoiced with Abel, and should have brought a similar sacrifice himself and had divine acceptance. God warned him that his spirit of selfish jealousy was sin, and that it like a wild beast crouched before the door of his heart, ready to spring upon him and overwhelm his better sentiments.

God forwarned him that he should conquer this beastly spirit of selfishness and jealousy, and rule over it. How much we all need to learn this lesson! Through the fall we all have baser sentiments which war against the nobler ones. As a beast of prey they would seek to devour us. The will must be exercised in overcoming the beast, and divine aid is needed. The Christian has this divine aid in his access to God through his Great Advocate, the Redeemer.

Cain heeded not God's warning. He ruled not the beast. He was overcome by it. His brother's blood cried, figuratively, to God. In other words, all injustice cries out to the God of Justice, and sooner or later the divine penalty will be meted out. But as we have seen, the judgments of the Lord are "just and righteous altogether." His judgments are left for the Great Mediator of the New Covenant to execute in sympathy and in kindness, during the Millennial age. That will be the world's Judgment day. Only accepted believers in Christ, begotten of the holy Spirit, are now on trial for life eternal or death eternal.

BROTHER-HATERS ARE MURDERERS

The Great Teacher, addressing, not the world, but the church, declares that brother-haters are murderers in God's sight. In other words, a spirit of hatred is a spirit of murder. Alas, how many have vicious, wicked, hateful dispositions, merely controlled by their fear of the law! Yet it is not the world, but only the church, that is being specially dealt with thus far. But alas! how many of the professed followers of Jesus occasionally harbor a spirit of hatred, and sometimes manifest it in anger, malice, envy, strife, works of the flesh and the devil!

Christians are accounted as new creatures because begotten of the holy Spirit. These are to fight a good warfare against their own flesh and its imperfections. Sin crouches before the door ready to devour them as new creatures. They must watch and pray and strive against the fallen nature. They must cultivate the fruits and graces of the holy Spirit—meekness, gentleness, patience, brotherly-kindness, love. If they do not do so, if, on the contrary, they are brother-haters and manifest the murder spirit, they have the warning that they will lose the great prize—joint-heirship in the kingdom.

The Scripture assurance is, "We know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him." (1 John 3:15) Whatever elements of the spirit of murder may still lurk in our flesh must be determinedly warred against, and, proportionally, we must become copies of our Heavenly Father and of our Lord Jesus. Thus we shall ultimately share with our Lord in his great kingdom, which is shortly to be set up, and to bless the world with the light and knowledge of the glory of God.

"WISE AS SERPENTS—HARMLESS AS DOVES"

MATTHEW 10:16.

Presumably all of the Lord's people remember the Master's words quoted in the title. Yet apparently very few have appreciated them; for otherwise they would surely be putting this advice into practice—seeking to do the Lord's will. When we think of blundering mistakes which others make and which we ourselves have made in presenting divine truths to others, we are silent. The consolation we seem to find is in the further word of Jesus, that God is sometimes praised by the prattling of the mouths of babes. As children of God we have a period of infancy, of childhood.

St. Paul refers to this, saying, "When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child; but when I became a man, I put away childish things." (1 Cor. 13:11) So we all need to exercise ourselves to some extent in order to counteract the results of the childishness and the mistakes of our earlier experiences in the family of the Lord. Let us not be content to remain children long. Let us rapidly grow in grace and knowledge and love. Let us take such earnest heed to the Master's words, that we may speedily become acceptable and profitable ambassadors for the King Eternal.

How often we have advised the dear readers of this journal not to choke Christian brethren who, so far as knowledge of God and his Word are concerned, are merest babes, no matter if their consecration dates twenty or thirty years back! When such come in our midst, their presence implies that they are hungering for spiritual food. Shall we stuff them to nausea-tion? Shall we feed them strong meat of divine truth which they cannot appreciate and which will choke them? Or shall we act more wisely and give them meat in due season—spiritual food adapted to their condition?

Some dear friends, full of zeal and greatly appreciated both by the Lord and by ourself, are so unwise that they would probably do the cause more good if they never attempted to expound the heavenly things to others—if they would content themselves with merely saying, "I will give you something to read which will make that subject very clear to you." On the contrary, there is danger that, when good meetings have been held for the public, and earnest souls are seeking the Lord, hungering and thirsting for the truth, they may be injured by those whose hearts are the very best, but whose judgments are poor.

THE POINT ILLUSTRATED

An illustration of this is before us in a letter. A friend writes, "I took friends to our regular meetings several times—people who have read some and manifested some interest. With one accord all of our class began, after the meeting, to acquaint them with all kinds of information, chiefly about the materialization of evil spirits and about Christ's presence, etc., with the result that they were so confused that they did not care to go again. Sometimes the leader of the class, discerning the visitor, will leave the regular lesson and go into dissertations which seem unwise for the newcomers and unprofitable to the class.

"The newcomers would have understood and appreciated our Berean Lesson, if the item specially intended for them had been omitted. I was discouraged about taking outsiders with us any more. When no strangers are with us, our Berean Lessons are good and instructive, because we stick closely to them. The tiresome rambling occurs when visitors come. So I am just keeping still and not inviting my friends, believing that it will do them more good to read thoroughly before attending our class under existing conditions."

This is an exact illustration of a point which we are making and which we have tried to make several times. We do not wish to discourage the dear friends from preaching the truth. We are merely urging the words of the Master, "Be ye wise as serpents and harmless as doves." Obedience to the Master should control whatever wayward and excitable tendencies may be ours naturally.

THIS JOURNAL AND ITS SACRED MISSION

This Journal is one of the prime factors or instruments in the system of Bible Instruction, or "Seminary Extension," now being presented in all parts of the civilized world by the WATCH TOWER BIBLE & TRACT SOCIETY, chartered A. D. 1881, "For the Promotion of Christian Knowledge." It not only serves as a class room where Bible Students may meet in the study of the Divine Word, but also as a channel of communication through which they may be reached with announcements of the Society's Conventions and of the coming of its traveling representatives styled "Pilgrims," and refreshed with reports of its Conventions.

Our "Berean Lessons" are topical rehearsals or reviews of our Society's published STUDIES, most entertainingly arranged, and very helpful to all who would merit the only honorary degree which the Society accords, viz., *Verbi Dei Minister* (V.D.M.), which translated into English, is *Minister of the Divine Word.* Our treatment of the International S. S. Lessons is specially for the older Bible Students and Teachers. By some this feature is considered indispensable.

This Journal stands firmly for the defense of the only true foundation of the Christian's hope now being so generally repudiated—Redemption through the precious blood of "the Man Christ Jesus, who gave Himself a Ransom [a corresponding price, a substitute] for all." (1 Pet. 1:19; 1 Tim. 2:6) Building up on this sure foundation the gold, silver and precious stones (1 Cor. 3:11-15; 2 Pet. 1:5-11) of the Word of God, its further mission is to—"Make all see what is the fellowship of the Mystery which . . . . has been hid in God, ... to the intent that now might be made known by the Church the manifold wisdom of God"—"which in other Ages was not made known unto the sons of men as it is now revealed."—Eph. 3:5-9, 10.

It stands free from all parties, sects and creeds of men, while it seeks more and more to bring its every utterance into fullest subjection to the will of God in Christ, as expressed in the Holy Scriptures. It is thus free to declare boldly whatsoever the Lord hath spoken—according to the Divine wisdom granted unto us, to understand. Its attitude is not dogmatical, but confident; for we know whereof we affirm, treading with implicit faith upon the sure promises of God. It is held as a trust, to be used only in His service; hence our decisions relative to what may and what may not appear in its columns must be according to our judgment of His good pleasure, the teaching of His Word, for the upbuilding of His people in grace and knowledge. And we not only invite but urge our readers to prove all its utterances by the infallible Word to which reference is constantly made, to facilitate such testing.

TO US THE SCRIPTURES CLEARLY TEACH

That the Church is "the Temple of the Living God"—peculiarly "His workmanship;" that its construction has been in progress throughout the Gospel Age—ever since Christ became the world's Redeemer and the Chief Corner Stone of His Temple, through which, when finished, God's blessing shall come "to all people," and they find access to Him.—1 Cor. 3:16, 17; Eph. 2:20-22; Gen. 28:14; Gal. 3:29.

That meantime the chiseling, shaping and polishing of consecrated believers in Christ's Atonement for sin, progresses; and when the last of these "living stones," "Elect and precious," shall have been made ready, the great Master Workman will bring all together in the First Resurrection; and the Temple shall be filled with His glory, and be the meeting place between God and men throughout the Millennium.—Rev. 15:5-8.

That the Basis of Hope, for the Church and the World, lies in the fact that "Jesus Christ, by the grace of God, tasted death for every man," "a Ransom for all," and will be "the true Light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world," "in due time."—Heb. 2:9; John 1:9; 1 Tim. 2:5, 6.

That the Hope of the Church is that she may be like her Lord, "see Him as He is," be "partaker of the Divine nature," and share His glory as His joint-heir.—1 John 3:2; John 17:24; Rom. 8:17; 2 Pet. 1:4.

That the present mission of the Church is the perfecting of the saints for the future work of service; to develop in herself every grace; to be God's witness to the world; and to prepare to be kings and priests in the next Age.—Eph. 4:12; Matt. 24:14; Rev. 1:6; 20:6.

That the hope for the World lies in the blessings of knowledge and opportunity to be brought to all by Christ's Millennial Kingdom—the Restitution of all that was lost in Adam, to all the willing and obedient, at the hands of their Redeemer and His glorified Church—when all the wilfully wicked will be destroyed.—Acts 3:19-23; Isa. 35.

CHARLES T. RUSSELL, Editor.

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BROTHER RUSSELL'S WEEKLY SERMONS

We remind all the dear friends afresh of the weekly sermons published in the newspapers. We recommend that you continue to encourage the publishers of these sermons by subscribing to the papers. Take as many as you can afford to purchase, especially the cheaper-priced papers—more especially those which publish the three-column sermons. Use these as tracts, marking sermon with blue pencil.

Some of the dear friends use the sermons as a part of their weekly service. At their Sunday meetings one of their number, who is in every way qualified, reads the sermon to them.

We have made arrangements with the Lecture Bureau that the weekly sermons may be published in advance for all classes who have elected Brother Russell as their Pastor and who write to us, indicating their desire to use the sermons as above. But we expect them also to assure us that this sending of the copy for class readings will not interfere with their patronage of the newspapers which publish the sermons. Secretaries requesting these advance copies will please ascertain from the classes how many different newspapers publishing the sermons are being taken by the class regularly.

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NEW POEMS OF DAWN

Our attention was called to the fact that many of our readers do not know that the Book of POEMS OF DAWN recently published is quite different from the old edition. It does, indeed, contain the choicest poems from the old edition, but it includes many entirely new. As part of God's staff for His weary ones to lean upon they are a present help in time of need. The prices are extremely low and include postage—cloth-bound, 25c.; Karatol-bound, 35c.; India paper, leather-bound, 50c.

BELOVED BROTHER RUSSELL:—

I am glad to have the favor of writing you a few lines. I often would like to write you, but I know the interest and work of the harvest press you, so I refrain from cumbering you with less important things. I would like to assure you of my interest and love for you as an humble, yet very greatly used instrument in the Lord's hand for the blessing and satisfying of his own true sheep. Well I remember how the burden rolled away when the scales of ignorance and tradition fell from my eyes and I was permitted, through the STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES, to see the light on God's plan (not man's) for his creatures, and only then for the first time could I truly believe God was love. I rejoiced and was glad and my joy continues increasingly; the sacred yoke of fellowship in his sufferings is easy and joyous. His law of love is my delight.

Now, dear Brother, the work of harvest goes on here as best we can with the available labor. A considerable number of STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES have been placed in the hands of the people of Auckland and suburbs during the past six years by diligent colporteurs. Each year since first the STUDIES were sold here we have systematically put out from about 30,000 to 50,000 tracts and the truth has been watered by Pilgrims from Melbourne. We were making preparations in hope of having you pay us a visit, and when we learned that it will not be his will now, we were sorry, but bowed in loyal submission. We had hopes that the truth would have a good presentation and that an interest might be awakened. Many have the books on the shelf, and only an awakening is needed to investigate, we feel sure.

Yours in grand Hope, DAVID HOOK.—New Zealand.